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ABSTRACT

This practicum report describes a 15-day in-room suspension strategy designed to reduce the increasing number of principal-initiated student suspensions resulting from inappropriate conduct. The program's distinguishing features entailed a central figure who predetermined the candidates by means of a pre-suspension interview, parental-student involvement and choice, and the student's motivation for avoiding an impending principal's suspension. A contingency contract delineated the conditions that necessitated pupil isolation, while promoting structure and a guidance curriculum that featured communication skills. It also introduced, through a point system, a behavioral modification strategy that conceivably reduced the duration of the in-room suspense from an unprecedented 15 school days to 10 days. The program was rehabilitative rather than punitive in design. Analysis of the program data revealed an impressive improvement among those in need of academic structure and a minimal effectiveness among reluctant participants. An accomplished teacher-in-charge, parental involvement, and continual intercommunication contributed to the program's success. The report's 11 appendices contain: (1) the program proposal; (2) the contingency contract; (3) an explanation of the point system; (4) an anecdotal or point system form; (5) an evaluation summary of the assignee; (6) the questionnaire, key, and results to the pretest-posttest sample of attitudes; (7) the teachers' survey and results analyzing attitudes of the IRS-RISC participants; (8) a student-parent interview critique; (9) the modified contingency contract; (10) the student progress sheet; and (11) the assignment format. Contains 60 references. (TJQ)

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Decreasing School Suspensions Among Middle School Children by Implementing a Rehabilitative In-Room Suspension

by

Ireneanne Novell

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A Practicum II Report presented to the Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Melvin Katz
Melvin Katz

Principal, David A. Stein Middle School 141
Title

Bronx, New York

January 10, 1994
Date

This practicum report was submitted by Ireneanne Novell under the direction of the advisor listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

January 27, 1994
Date of Final Approval of Report

Roberta Silfen
Roberta Silfen, Ed.D., Adviser

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ABSTRACT

Decreasing School Suspensions Among Middle School Children: An In-Room, Rehabilitative Strategy. Novell, Ireneanne, 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Contingency Contract/ Isolation/ Uninterrupted Studies/ Point System/ Guidance Component

This practicum was designed to decrease suspensions among middle school students by offering previously suspended students and their parents a choice to elect an in-room (RISC) suspension program in lieu of an impending suspension. RISC evoked responsibility thereby rehabilitating its candidates.

RISC's contingency contract featured isolation, structure, and a guidance curriculum with a minimum two week compulsatory attendance. If the candidate or parent abrogated the terms of the contract, the suspense was subsequently implemented. A point system reflected the degree of student progress and served to motivate an earlier return to class.

Analysis of the data revealed an impressive improvement among those in need of academic structure and a minimal affectiveness among reluctant participants. An accomplished teacher-in-charge, parental involvement, and continual intracommunication contributed to the program's success.

* * * * * * * *

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The community consists of professional, upper-middle-class families who reside in skyscrapers, apartment condos, and private dwellings. Its metropolitan environs are serviced by local businesses and community centers which generate a neighborhood atmosphere. A suburban setting is reflected among single-family estates. Geographically, this affluent area is an integral component of one of the largest educational systems of northeastern United States. It is administratively divided into 32 districts, each effectively managed by an appointed superintendent. Though independent of each other, the district superintendents are directly responsible to the Chancellor of the system and are also subject to the state directives, rules, and regulations that govern the public education process.

Each elementary school of a given community exclusively accommodates the children of the local residences. As many as 5 to 10 diverse communities may exist within a given district. In fact, it is common practice for a middle or junior high school to receive students from a minimum of four contiguous elementary schools. Many of the professional parents of the community, in an attempt to secure academic excellence on a secondary educational level, tend to transfer their progeny to private institutions of learning. Consequently, the facilities at the practicum site were deemed underutilized. Mandated by the district office to extend its enrollment boundaries, the school is now obliged to enlist pupils that reside farther north and south from the immediate community as well as students from other districts. The work setting which formerly served as a junior high school from 1957 to September 1992 currently accommodates 6th, 7th, and 8th grade pupils and provides a comprehensive middle school experience for its student-body. Five elementary schools continue to serve as feeder schools to the middle school in this community. This secondary school presently services a myriad of students of heterogeneous ethnicity. The socioeconomic strata of this student population range from two-parent homes of the very wealthy to single-parent domiciles of the welfare recipients. The former may house one-to-three domestics; the latter is frequently unskilled, unemployed, and illiterate. More than 50% of the children reside in areas located more than one mile from the middle school and are accorded busing services in the sixth grade and free or reduced public transportation privileges in the 7th and 8th grades. According to the 1992-1993 student eligibility survey for the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program, 692 of the 1310 applicants attending the middle school were eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch privileges; approximately 47% of the student body receive reduced breakfast and lunch privileges.

Author's Work Setting and Role

The work setting for the writer is the newly formed middle school in the above community that presently accommodates more than 1300 children of the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. As the dean of discipline of the sixth grade, the author has the responsibility of maintaining an atmosphere conducive to positive learning, is obliged to enforce the rules and regulations promulgated by the administrative staff, and is educationally liable to members of the teaching staff in creating a safe academic environment for the sixth grade student body. Directly accountable to both the sixth grade assistant principal and the principal, the writer is empowered to implement a hierarchy of disciplinary measures commensurate with pupil infractions. This entails the assigning of detention during school hours, at lunchtime; after school hours, from 3 P.M. to 4 P.M.; and the initiation of principal and superintendent suspensions. Together with the sixth grade guidance counselor and sixth grade assistant principal, a child's aberrant behavior is periodically reviewed and evaluated by the author. Suggestions and recommendations that would deter unacceptable behavior of the individual are frequently introduced as well as pedagogically implemented by the author as a member of the triage. The segment of the practicum population which the author directly services consists of approximately 450 multicultural and ethnically diverse sixth grade pupils who range in age from 11 to 14 years in age and who comprise a body of 40% Hispanic, 40% Afro-American, 10% Asian, and 10% Caucasian learners. These students reflect a hierarchy of abilities and talents. While 15% of the sixth graders are in need of supplementary services and receive resource instruction and/or counseling, approximately the same percentage of students are

academically advanced and function on a high school level. For purposes of the practicum, the sample population extends to all students of the middle school.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

A continual display of aberrant behavior and an increase of student infractions which impede the progress of learning and/or endanger the safety and welfare of the student body persisted despite the increase of principal suspensions; suspensions had become less effective as a disciplinary tool.

There were 271 school-wide principal suspensions implemented during the school year 1990-1991 in contrast to 325 school-wide principal suspensions executed during the school year 1991-1992 demonstrating a suspense increase of 20%. Neither violence, crime, nor inappropriate student behavior had abated.

Contained in the hierarchy of disciplinary measures, Regulations of the Chancellor No. A-440 and No. A-441 (May 31,1991, pp.1-39), were the stipulated degrees and codification of pupil infractions and the administrative empowerment to

discipline students. The regulations served to justify the implementation of both principal and superintendent suspenses. It was extensively used as a punitive tool and source of legal justification rather than a critique and guideline, in order to propose alternative strategies or to project intermediate measures to suspense. Since students were permitted a maximum of two principal suspensions prior to a superintendent's suspension and probable school transfer, remedial and intermediate methods were needed to increase the effectiveness of school suspensions. The recently elected superintendent of the district acknowledged student indifference to authority, conducted several conferences with the respective deans of the district during the 1991-1992 school year, and demonstrated the urgency for alternative measures to suspension. No new strategies were promulgated by the superintendent. Each school was expected to rise to the challenge, exercise creativity, and implement appropriate remediation. Punitive directives that were implemented by the author's administration, inclusive of detention, had not effectively addressed the problem nor decreased inappropriate behavior.

In brief, alternative methods were needed to decrease aberrant behavior, violence, and crime among the pupils of the middle school because the punitive measures of principal and superintendent suspensions, designed by the chancellor and exercised by school administrators had diminished in effectiveness.

Problem Documentation

Evidence to support the existence of this problem was supported and documented by official statistics and reports of the

board of education, district circulars, citizen complaints, newspaper articles, observations, and interviews.

The Annual Census, Table A 2 of the School Profile, year 1991-1992, reflected demographic information and an inordinate increase of principal suspensions when compared to the Annual Census of 1990-1991. The number of principal suspensions that were logged at the school site, district office, and central board of education during the 1991-1992 school year mirrored an identical increase of 54 recorded suspensions when compared to the suspense files of the 1990-1991 semester.

Incident Reports that were filed by victims of violence at the practicum site had increased by more than 150% between the school year 1990-1991 and the 1991-1992 semester. Parents, whose children were victims of aggravated assault and gang violence in neighborhoods contiguous to the school, were encouraged by school officials to file complaints with the local police of the district. Logged and numbered police precinct complaints also evidenced an increase in violence, from 1990 to 1992 among the pupils who attended the practicum site.

The "District Superintendent Circular to Principals" (Rehill, March 12, 1992) chastised school officials for implementing an increased number of principal suspensions and urged all administrators to employ remedial strategies of discipline. As a result, the school district's Crisis Prevention and Intervention Team was prevailed upon more frequently to offer its expertise in cases of repeated and/or unprecedented violence by members of the administration, inclusive of the writer. Anecdotal records of the district's Crisis Prevention and Intervention Team which encompassed a bilingual psychologist, bilingual social worker, substantive abuse personnel, and various support services revealed a participatory increase at the practicum site, from 1990

to the present, due to incidents of nonacademic factors effecting student behavior.

Letters were written by elementary school administrators to supervisors of the practicum site acknowledging the problem of violence and suggesting a joint collaboration of personnel in order to promote acceptable conduct among all pupils. In an attempt to secure maximum safety for the grade-school children who attended a feeder school one block south of the practicum site, interviews and telephone conversations were conducted between the author and elementary-school principal whereby newly designed dismissal plans of the middle school learners were relayed.

Local newspaper articles, editorials, and letters-to-the-editor had illustrated the crime and violence perpetrated against children and residents nexus to the school. In response to complaints that were lodged by constituents concerning violence in and contiguous to the practicum site, a state assemblyman made an unannounced visit to the middle school in October 1992, in order to ascertain the justification of such complaints.

In early spring of 1992, a seminar was conducted by the author with members of the School Based Support Team (SBST) inclusive of social workers, school psychologists, and evaluators in order to explore alternatives to principal and superintendent suspensions in the hope that the aberrant behavior of the student-body would decrease within the school and its environs. An affective in-room suspension was discussed; one which was rehabilitative in design rather than a "dumping ground" for the challenging learner was suggested.

Later that month, in March 1992, with the approval of the principal and using the format prescribed by the superintendent of the school district, a proposal was submitted by the writer establishing a rehabilitative in-room suspension program (see

appendix A). It was a proposal tailored to meet the needs of the school, the requests of the staff, and conformed to the dictum of the chancellor, namely, Memorandum, No. 33, 1990-1991 concerning Student Safety and Discipline Policy Regulations.

The staff became increasingly concerned about the deterioration of discipline in the school. Offering the author's strategy as a possible solution to the discipline problem, the principal spoke candidly about the writer's proposal at a faculty conference. Many teachers expressed their opinions for-and-against the concept of in-room suspensions. Many of the staff members acknowledged the need of greater discipline but felt that budgetary cuts, increased class sizes, and the personal, financial hardships that accrued working sans a teacher's contract superceded the need of an in-room suspense program. Devoting another on-line teacher to a designated in-room suspense program or assigning teachers to the in-room program as an administrative assignment appeared to exacerbate the difficulties most educators were experiencing. Since the administrative staff was directed by the district superintendent to convert the practicum site to a middle school by September 1992, the members of the faculty felt that needed disciplinary changes would best serve the staff more effectively and precipitate a smoother transition if implemented cojointly with the middle school changes in September, 1992. Comments by 12 out of 30 teachers who were serviced by the author voluntarily conveyed the need to implement a more effective discipline strategy either by letter or memo. Their comments may be viewed via Table 1.

Table 1

Volunteered Comments by Teachers of the Practicum Site During the 1991-1992 Semester Requesting More Effective Discipline

Teacher n = 12		Comments
1.	1.	What good is suspension if the child returns more brazen than ever?
2.	2.	I wish we could get rid of one or two so I could get to the business of teaching.
3.	3.	Because of their inattentiveness, I'm not sure if some children do not want to do their work or if they can't do their work.
4.	4.	You've got to do something....fast!
5.	5.	It's getting worse every term.
6.	6.	Even if we get rid of an incorrigible, we get another that is twice the terror.
7.	7.	I don't think it is the children as much as it is the parents. They tell their children to hit if anyone "dis's"[disrespect's] them. Parents come to school to do battle and physically fight other children in behalf of their children.
8.	8.	Students look forward to being suspended
9.	9.	Suspension is another word for holiday.
10.	10.	You hurt the parent in the pocketbook when you suspend a child. You don't affect the child.
11.	11.	Unless you can teach a child to respect authority, don't bother suspending.
12.	12.	Detention is a challenge; suspension a medal of honor. It doesn't work.

On September 21, 1992, the district superintendent recirculated Chancellor's Memorandum No. 33, 1990-1991, and requested all administrative personnel within the district to submit proposals from members of their staff for "Alternate Educational Programs for Suspended Students". The author's proposal was accepted with modifications. The practicum site was selected as one of two sites in the district and allocated $120,0000.00 in funding.

Causative Analysis

It was the writer's belief that there were a myriad of causes to the behavioral problems found in the middle-school; administrative, developmental, dysfunctional family-living, and poor communication skills were the most apparent.

The transition from self-contained, nurtured, elementary classes to departmentalized programs of intense instruction and subject-selectivity engendered confusion, feelings of inadequacy, decline of academic motivation and performance, and loss of confidence and self-esteem thereby culminating in frustration whereby the young learner looked outside the school and home for solace, attention, and rewards. Since each child's developmental growth was unique, the sheltered, shy, early and/or latent pubescent required understanding and a monitored introduction to change. Most middle school teachers were less preoccupied with a student's limitations, idiosyncracies, and personal problems than elementary instructors and tended to concentrate on subject development and scholastic norms as do their secondary school colleagues. The administration failed to afford its staff

essential workshops and training sessions that were endemic to understanding the pedagogical differences and the contrasting needs among the incoming and ethnically diverse elementary pupils and the attending junior high school children. Affective communication practices, productive classroom management techniques, and meaningful disciplinary strategies were neither suggested, nor implemented.

Approximately one-third of the students of the practicum site were technically eligible for, but were not recipients of Chapter 1 assistance. Instead, individual guidance, group guidance classes, and mentoring programs needed to service the pubescent in acquiring confidence and social approval were either conspicuously missing or sparsely implemented. Neither did one find prevention/intervention strategies that would serve to thwart and resolve peer conflicts such as peer-mediation and peer counseling groups in existence at the practicum site.

During the struggle for one's individual identity, the early pubescent may become defiant, judgmental, and manipulative at home and at school. Endeavoring to be self-assertive, independent, and selective the youngster had been frequently insolent, defiant, and disrespectful. Insensitive to the needs of others, power-struggles between those in authority and peers dominated. Young boys expressed their individuality by attempting to master their environment. Often these actions were communicated through violence whereas young girls engaged in violence in order to gain peer acceptance and/or as a survival skill; survival against gang attacks.

The emotional and psychological challenges of the young forced the early pubescent to repeatedly seek solace, attention, and approval outside the school and beyond the home. Peer-support-groups and substitute pseudo family-affiliates

satiated the adolescent's needs of acceptance. Unfortunately, members of the newly acquired peer group were often troubled themselves. They embraced antisocial trappings and philosophies which fostered acts of violence or engaged in substantive abuse. In order to acquire acceptance and recognition among peers as well as express their individuality adolescents sought designer apparel, status-seeking fashions, and highly priced accessories; if parents could not provide these items, children frequently resorted to crime an violence in order to obtain them. Peer pressure and the fear of being ostracized and/or victimized commonly forced young adults to engage in unprecedented activities of intimidation and the bullying of fellow-peers. Confused and incapable of coping with the onset of puberty these children masked their insecurities with, bravado.

A minimum of 20% of the students were products of single-parented, dysfunctional families who resided in drug-infested neighborhoods, observed criminality pollute their lives, and who shared impending dangers from rival streetgangs. Inconsistent family discipline, inappropriate values, and negative role models served as mixed messages, confused the child, and exacerbated an adolescent's aberrant misconduct. Latchkey students who had limited supervision were the last to leave and the first to return home. Left to their own devices, these children had been forced to assume adult intrafamily responsibilities. The parent became dependent upon the child linguistically and misguidedly thwarted educators' efforts to promote better attendance, improve academic performance, or ameliorate misconduct by blindly supporting the self-interests of the child and family. Lying for the child and failing to cooperate with school authorities reinforced unacceptable conduct and created mixed messages.. Unsupervised at a time

(b) needed peer acceptance and consequently succumbed to peer pressure, assumed uniform standards of dress, and emulated each other's behavior; (c) sought personal power in order to realize self-esteem, confidence, and self-worth; (d) had been victims of hunger, child abuse, or harbored displaced anger; and (e) possessed organic disabilities engendered by fetal alcoholic syndrome, prenatal substantive abuse, or genetic abnormalities.

Discipline in treating these causes was perceived as punitive rather than rehabilitative. Educators admonished the symptoms and ignored the underlying causes. No intermediary or remedial measure of discipline existed within the school. No concerted effort was made to uncover the reasons for unacceptable conduct. After exhausting a hierarchy of detention options, the student was suspended thereby interrupting and impeding the education of the suspensee. Suspense simply served to exacerbate the academic shortcomings, social maladjustments or dysfunctional family problems of the pupil.

The Related Literature

A review of the literature entailed a dichotomy of thought concerning the causes of aberrant behavior among young adolescents; how one perceived inappropriate conduct, therefore, was germane to the methods implemented in containment and correction. Theorists Rosenberg, Geca, Gleason, and Chickering who depicted adolescence as a natural search for one's identity and who characterized this period as the "storm and stress" period in the continuum of developmental growth tended to be more tolerant and understanding of inappropriate behavior than educators who viewed misconduct

as the absence of discipline and societal values. For example, Erikson (1969) and Smilansky (1991) viewed male identity as self-focusing, the result of an experiential search for independence and autonomy; an autonomy gained through the deliberate physical separation, mental and emotional independence from family authority and domination. Rooted in the development of one's worth and self-confidence, male identity would have been realized when the environment at hand was mastered. (Erikson,1969, p.122) Female developmental theorists illustrated feminine identity through the importance of interpersonal relationships and attachment to others. Douvan and Adelson, (1966, as seen in Gilligan, Lyons, and Hammer, 1990, p. 164), and Chodorow (1980), revealed how girls sought connectedness with others in their personal growth. Consequently, Smilansky (1991, P. 70), found boys showed less empathy for parental needs, were interested in forming a vocational identity, and strove for autonomy from girlfriends and parents alike while Gilligan (1982, p.47), illustrated how girls prepared themselves for intimacy, coped with autonomy, and retained communication with mothers and boyfriends and/or husbands. Robertson (1991) believed that the search for identity was a more gradual process than narrated by Erikson and that " a significant part of this process occurred within the educational setting, usually a public school." (p. 63). Consequently, schools bear the responsibility of addressing identity development and issues of self-concept in order to promote achievement. Marcia (1966) in his two dimensional matrix projected the pubescent in 1 of 4 identity states; the state of achievement or decision-making, the moratorium state of crisis and non-commitment, the identity diffusion or noncommittal stage, and the state of foreclosure or the adaptation of parental goals without the experience of crisis.

Hummel & Roselli (1983) and Meilmen (1979) concurred with Marcia that the moratorium period is a necessary state in facilitating a healthy identity development and criticized schools who demanded conformity, submission to authority, and academic commitment as it encourages foreclosure and curtails needed time to experiment.

Peter Blos (1962), who considered adolescence a critical stage in personality formation, had borrowed from Mahler's definition of "primary individuation" in early childhood to define the beginning of adolescence as "secondary individuation " and proposed that adolescents experienced a partial regression to earlier developmental stages which in turn reawakens unresolved conflicts, detaches infantile possessions, and concludes with parental independence, love interests outside the family, and a conceptualization of self.

On the other hand, Deutsch (1992), in recognizing the importance of discipline discussed the benefits of teaching young adolescents the techniques of conflict resolution, defensive communication such as avoidance, denial, repression, suppression, and postponement while Johnson, Johnson, Dudley, & Burnett (1992) were supportive of peer mediation.

Dysfunctional family-life was viewed as a prime contributor to violence by Gough, (1990); McCormack, (1990); and Sutcliffe (1988) and the need for family participation, responsibility, and cohesiveness in the education of children was promoted by writers DeRidder, (1991); Bernstein, (1990); and Manos (1988). Ediger & Marlow (1987) exhibited how dysfunctional families aggravate anti-social behaviors and patterns of emotional disorder of the pubescent through parental exhibitionism and displaced anger. Walker & Sylvester, (1991); Burke, (1991); Bernstein, (1990); and

Wardell (1990) maintained if a child feels rejected at home he/she will seek security elsewhere by creating its own family and seeking approbation from those who are often ostracized from school themselves. Nicholas Anastasiow (1988) favored instituting parenting classes for uneducated parents and those in need of life-skills-knowledge in order to enhance children's potential.

MacIver (1990) placed the burden of responsibility for inappropriate conduct of children upon schools and their failure to offer social and support services such as partnership networking with parents and regularly scheduled advisory groups that respond more readily to the personal and academic needs of the students. In support of John Silbur's premise (Silbur, Shanker, and Steele, 1990) that schools hindered a student's ability to realize personal fulfillment, Muus (1988), Robertson (1991), and Sizer (1984) maintained that the curricula offered by schools was impersonal, unfulfilled, and void of interpersonal interaction and responsibility.

Since mediocre scholasticism was traced to the lack of discipline in the schools, Overman, in 1979, reviewed the writings of three educators whose works had come to be regarded as the bastion of classroom management, namely, Gordon, Dreikurs, and Glasser (Tauber, 1989). Despite the attempt at early intervention, as suggested by Walker and Sylvester, (1991) half the crimes were committed by children under 15 years of age; 75% of whom are boys (Patterson & Bank, 1986). Sutera (1992) affirmed that crime in the middle school had reached the highest level since the UFT began compiling statistics in 1973; it had increased "21% which was the second largest divisional increase after high schools which experienced a 39.5% increase." (p.1)

The literature revealed diverse causes to the problem. President of Boston University, John Silber who described the disarray of public institutions as a threat to the nation's ability to compete economically, regarded public schools as a deterrent to a child's ability to achieve personal fulfillment, denounced facilities that failed to address inappropriate conduct, and attributed complacency, excessive viewing of television, the changing role of women, and the lowered standards used to recruit teachers as its cause (Silber, Shanker, and Steele, 1990). Bernstein (1990) and Wardell (1990) evidenced that a lack of administrative leadership and subsequent failure to impose a code of conduct within the school rendered a child indifferent; emotional fulfillment was consequently sought in friends. Jackard (1983) blamed a "valueless school system" (p. 20) while other studies (Brannon 1988; Elam, 1990; Gough, 1990; McCormack, 1990; and Sutcliffe, 1988) stressed accountability, the need to prioritize education, and a positive attitude towards school and authority. Bernstein (1990) admonished administrative leaders who accepted inappropriate street-parlance in the classroom, tolerated vulgarity in the school, or failed to curtail the intimidation and bullying of others.

The Attendance Improvement, Dropout Prevention and Replication Program (1989) initiated project SMART, a project that targeted at-risk students "...with unique family problems that make violence a likely method of resolving disputes" (Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, 1989, p.9). It recognized that targeted students not only lacked interpersonal communication skills but needed the acumen to avoid confrontation. Aggressive youths relied on hearsay, seldom searched for facts or alternative solutions, jealously guarded personal peer-power, and frequently equated self-esteem with bullying, violence, and membership into a gang.

(Steinberg, 1991) Bullying was the most enduring, underrated, unreported problem which caused psychological and emotional harm to the victim and which encompassed criminal acts of robbery, aggravated assault, violent victimization, and terrorism both within as well as contiguous to the school (Stephens, 1991).

The behavioral modification practices of Skinner, Bandura, et. al. was favored by Vincent and Bostdorff (1990) in an attempt to resolve the problem of pubescent fighting and violence. The environment or source of the negative stimuli was identified, isolated, and behavioral management principles were applied to both correct and control the unacceptable behavior by a program of rewards and reinforcements. The basis of this theory was founded in the concept that man's behavior was the result of his environment. Thus, included among a child's most influential environment was his home and school. In order to change the deviant behavior one must alter the environment that was the source of the negative stimuli.

Ligon and Jackson (1988) revealed that middle school children most often failed to bring materials to class, arrived late to class as a result of seeking their materials, and frequently appeared preoccupied. Bruns, (1992) Wardell, (1990) and Witornbeck & Artl. (1991) likewise demonstrated the disorganization of the middle school child by illustrating attention-deficit inhibitors and pupil forgetfulness in receiving instruction and executing assignments; both culminated in stress, frustration, and misconduct. Wardell also disclosed that the large minority and less-advantaged population was the most affected. Though today's young adults were better prepared to enter the adult world than any previous generation as a result of their cognitive and physical maturity, society continued to reject their admittance via archaic laws of age and precedent

and subjects young adults to unnecessary conflict and confusion (Pardeck and Pardeck, 1990).

The "kids of the 90's" have been tauted as a "bolder breed" (Mansnerus, 1993, p.1). The strategies of the 50's and the 60's have not been as effective when applied to the 90's adolescent. The 90's child is characterized as angry, fearful, aggressive, and violent; one whose self esteem and self-preservation is predicated upon the carrying of weapons and gang-identification rather than the exercise of respect, hard work, and future planning. Respect for authority is neither ingrained nor automatically projected. Role reversals have been apparent in homes where English is not spoken by the parent as well as in the dysfunctional single-parent household (Lee, 1993). Relying on their children linguistically and/or domestically parents vie for offspring approval (Antilla, 1993). Networking takes place on a one-on-one basis of equality transforming the role of the parent from a peremptory dispenser and enforcer of family rules of behavior, values, and academic guidance to a disempowered provider. Regardless of locale, innercity and suburban teenagers have acquired a "sense of entitlement, ...a make me attitude ....[and] a ....blurring of the distinction between being an adolescent and being an adult" (Mansnerus, 1993, p. 4). Educators acknowledged the relationship between adults and adolescents have changed. Both dress alike, speak to each other as equals, and share discretionary responsibilities and incomes.

A survey, conducted from September 22, through October 5, 1993, included public school students and teachers of grades 3-12, and sponsored by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company divulged that nearly 1 in 4 students have been victims of violence; violence that escalated from "...pushing, shoving, grabbing, slapping, verbal insults and stealing" (Kamen, 1993, p.A37). Boys were twice as likely to have been victims than

girls of comparable age. And,13% of the students polled admitted carrying weapons to school to impress others and feel important.

The official district superintendent suspense list and crisis intervention annotations of New York City, which mirrors most urban cities, revealed that 82% of the pupils charged with crimes or acts of violence had at least one prior arrest before the age of 14. Glueck and Glueck (1974) demonstrated that 48% of all anti-social behavior surfaces before the age of 8; some children may be predisposed to delinquent behavior at birth. In the absence of parenting skills and intact family life theorists have looked to the schools and educators rather than the penal system for solutions.

Those who are considered incorrigible struggle with a healthy, positive identity, exercise infantile culpability, lack social recognition, harbor unacceptable standards of morality and engage in practices detrimental to society. In an attempt to escape the hostile academic world where they are treated with disdain, the real world is recognized as less inimical; the act of dropping out of school is perceived as one of necessity in order to survive. It is here they hope to regain and develop a sense of self-esteem (Robertson, 1991).

The topical areas researched were administrative, legal, psychological, philosophical, and behavioral modification strategies of human development.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Statement of General Goals

The goal of the writer was to decrease the number of principal suspensions, to reduce the violence in and nexus to the school, and to introduce the value of non-violent communication among the targeted group of learners located at the practicum site.

Behavioral Expectations

It was expected that as a result of implementation, school officials would acknowledge a rehabilitative alternative to principal suspensions. The following specific objectives, standards of performance, and assessment instruments were

used by the author to measure the level of success experienced with this program:

Objective One: There will be a 25% decrease in principal suspensions for the school year 1992-1993, in contrast to principal suspensions of the corresponding months of the baseline year 1991-1992, among the general-educational students. The official suspensions that were logged at the practicum site, annotated at the district and central board of education offices served as the evaluation tools of measurement.

Objective Two: There will be a 15% decrease of repeat suspense-offenders, after attending the IRS-RISC program, for the school year 1992-1993, in contrast to the repeat-offenders who were not privy to the program, during the corresponding months of the baseline year 1991-1992.

Objective Three: Those students attending the IRS-RISC program will demonstrate a 25% referral-submission decrease, during a 2 month period following the completion of the program in comparison to the number of individual referrals received by the dean, during the baseline period, 2 months prior to the IRS-RISC attendance. Dated referral slips were forwarded to the dean by subject teachers and administrators that annotated the infraction of an individual student thereby becoming a matter of record; a record that served as the tool of measurement.

Objective Four:: There will be an academic grade-average increase of 10% among the major subjects of those students who complete the IRS-RISC

program, during the following quarterly-marking period when comparing the grade-average of the the baseline period, or quarterly-marking period prior to attending IRS-RISC. Student rating sheets, the official academic record that reflect the academic history of each student served as the tool of measurement during the pre-and-post IRS-RISC periods of implementation.

Evaluation Instruments:

Formal anecdotal suspense records that were logged at the practicum site, forwarded to the superintendent's district office, and computerized at the central board of education served to stipulate both the cause as well as the dates of suspense imposed upon individual students. The suspense records, as of September 1991 and prior to the implementation of the program, served as the baseline from which a progression was verified during the period of implementation. These records served both as a tool of reference and measurement. The immediate principal suspension and the number of former principal suspensions imposed upon a given student were enumerated and documented therein. These records were available at the practicum site upon demand.

Referrals that were submitted by either faculty or administrative staff members were uniform in design, carbon-copied in triplicate, and advocated by the principal. Each referral-form reflected the basis for the referral, the immediate

action taken by the referrer, and the subsequent disposition and/or action taken by the on-grade dean of discipline. The deans retained a single copy and placed it in the student's file, the second copy was forwarded to the on-grade guidance counselor, and the third was returned to the referring party remonstrating the disposition of the charge. Filed referrals received two months prior to the implementation of the program served as the baseline period from which a progression could be verified when compared with the referrals received two months after the completion of the program.

Permanent rating sheets or official academic records had been designed and computerized by the board of education. These records were regarded as official documents and were frequently used as legal evidence in the courts of law. The rating sheets served as an academic evaluation instrument. A scholastic comparison was made between the quarterly marking period prior to the learner's admittance into the program and the quarterly marking period following the completion of the course. The quarterly marking period prior to the pupil's admittance into the IRS-RISC program served as the baseline period from which a progression could be verified. Though special subjects such as physical education and shops were disclosed on the rating sheets, for purposes of this practicum only the five major subjects undertaken by each candidate was considered in determining academic progression or regression.

To effectively measure the attitudinal changes among the participants of the program two evaluation instruments were implemented; a student questionnaire that encompassed identical pretest-posttest queries and a teachers' survey distributed among the students' five major subject teachers upon the immediate and later periods of the participant's return to class. To establish a baseline from which a

progression could be verified with the questionnaire, the test was administered by the writer at the outset of the in-room suspense. The same test or questionnaire was used as a posttest at the conclusion of the activity (see Appendix F). The questionnaire was designed by the writer, consisted of four categories, and contained a combination of questions of closed items, open items, and partially open items of interest. The questions contained in categories A, B, and C were weighted and numerically scaled according to the degree of attitudinal change (see "Key" to the Students' Questionnaire, as found in Appendix F). Structured to probe personal attitudes of self, school, as well the interaction among peers and adults, the questions were answerable by a 0-10 point key. Students receiving the highest score of 50 points in each of the A, B, and C categories were deemed to demonstrate the highest or most positive attitude towards themselves and their peers. Conversely, those who scored a maximum of 25 points reflected indifference or an inability to communicate with others. When volunteered, the statements of category D were enumerated, as a source of information (see "Enumerated Answers of Category D of the Student Questionnaire," Appendix F). The purpose of the questionnaire and survey was to determine if attitudinal and behavioral differences were recognized by the individual participant, observed by their respective teachers, and, if a common perception was evident.

To ascertain teacher-evaluation of the IRS-RISC participant the writer's self-designed survey was disseminated a second time, at the end of the following quarterly marking period to the identical 5 major teachers of the baseline period. Since the teacher's survey consisted of six questons, their answers were tabulated (see Appendix G "Teachers' Survey and Results Analyzing IRS-RISC,"). Another

purpose of the dual response was to determine if either immediate and/or sustained student changes of behavior, attitude, beliefs, as well as academic performance of the candidate were sustained.

The measuring instruments, questionnaires, and surveys located in the appendices have been designed by the author for use with this specific program.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

Since no central figure determined the number or type student remanded for in-room suspensions (IRS), but allowed all teachers to use the program as a "dumping-ground" for repeat offenders and potential dropouts, Diem (1988) was highly critical of campus suspensions at a middle school in San Antonio, Texas. No remedial efforts were expended to alter behaviors. Consequently, there was a strong correlation between the assignee, repeat offenders, and potential dropouts.

Several studies (Hegner,1987; Overman,1979; Rood, 1989) suggested parental involvement and frequent if not daily communication to increase positive attitudes, solicit understanding, and increase cooperation of those assigned to in-room suspensions. Contingency contracts, clearly written, concise, and enforceable that not only outlined the responsibilities of parent, pupil, and school, but the

consequences as well were suggested by MacNaughton and Johns (1991), and Neff (1990).

Johnston (1989), a director of in-room suspensions, who served in a school that was cited as a model of excellence by the U.S. Department of Education in 1985 assigned students to IRS for a minimum of three days, encouraged students to complete assignments that were forwarded by subject teachers, offered academic assistance to those suspended, and permitted little to no social interaction while being suspended. Advising early intervention as a requisite to achieving the greatest positive results, Johnston urged implementors to design structured programs. DeRidder (1990) supported the IRS because it gave the suspendee an opportunity to continue academic pursuits, participate in rehabilitative management, and receive individual and group counseling.

Despite his noteworthy guideline to a successful in-room suspension and his concession that in-room suspensions offer a solution that would meet both educational and parental demands for effective discipline, Sullivan (1989) cautioned that most programs only delay inevitable, out-of-school suspensions and have had little impact on the chronically disruptive student primarily because such strategies inevitably evolve into an extended removal device and had failed to serve as a rehabilitative technique. Emphasizing research, pre-planning, measurable objectives, uniformity of expressed and communicated rules, and a strong commitment as the key elements to a successful IRS, Sullivan cautioned against using the IRS as a substitute for a classroom teacher's responsibility for discipline or as the initial response to minor behavioral problems. The educator warned against using punishment without meeting the

student's needs of individual attention and tutoring, behavioral restructuring, and addressing the root cause for the inappropriate response to school rules. Twelve steps, inclusive of planning, development, and evaluation stages were delineated by Sullivan in order to insure the successful implementation of an IRS program. Among the suggestions enumerated were (a) determine the reasons why students were assigned to the in-room suspense program, (b) interview experienced suspense-directors in order to determine the pitfalls to success, (c) design a disciplinary plan and philosophical base, (d) identify measurable objectives that are in accord with the proposed philosophies, (e) estimate expenditures for personnel, materials, equipment, and training needs, (f) select a trained and committed staff for one's implementation, and (g) orient all members of the faculty in order to help insure success. Finally, Sullivan maintained if the IRS is to be used as the consequence for a myriad of offenses, no matter how well intended or designed, the IRS will lose its effectiveness.

Applying the concept that man's behavior is the result of his environment, Skinner and Bandura, social learning theorists implemented behavioral modification techniques to successfully rehabilitate incorrigible youths. Emulating the initial work of Skinner and Bandura's behavioral modification strategy, Vincent and Bostdorff (1990) pragmatically advanced that emotionally handicapped learners and children exhibiting emotional difficulties, however, were not favored as candidates for rehabilitation. Their needs are complex. They require an inordinate amount of individual and psychological attention.

Witornbeck and Artl (1991), in depicting the challenges of the century, cited Melton's National Association

of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) publication entitled, "An Agenda for Excellence at the Middle Level" whereby the single, most important element was "core values to be transmitted to the student" (1985, p.95). Kirkpatrick (1992) viewed our youth as products of "moral illiteracy" whereby basic values of kindness, responsibility, and self-control were not only lacking but results in shame and loss of self-respect. Rekoske (1993) concurred and suggested educators focus on remediating pupil behaviors, augmenting student self-esteem, and increasing pupil responsibility among the deviant. Similarly, Jackard (1983) advocated the return of group guidance classes as an integral course of study among the youngsters of junior high school age. Within these courses values and the current problems of the adolescent indigenous to the school population should be addressed; values that were formally taught in the home have become the responsibility of today's educators. Schunk (1982) claimed that children who monitored their own progress, engaged in self-monitoring or external monitoring techniques, and participated in individual goal-setting strategies (Schunk, 1981) increased their self-esteem and academic advancement. In addition, a student code system was advocated by Stoner and Cerminara (1991) through which peer mediation was taught, practiced, and mastered in order to enforce values, fairness, and consistency among students, staff, and administrators.

Student's rights, due process, and basic procedural requirements for short-term student suspensions had become a matter of precedent via Goss v Lopez, the Fourteenth Amendment, and the Supreme Court dictum of 1975 (Zirkel and Gluckman, 1990) where-upon it was adjudicated that the assignee to a suspension must be given "oral or written notice

of the charges against him, an explanation of the evidence, and an opportunity to present his side of the story." (p. 95)

Other ideas to be explored incorporated the philosophy that assumes misbehavior is a symptom of an underlying problem; implementors of IRS-RISC were challenged to address, identify, and remediate that problem. IRS-RISC was a transitional program intended to address the academic, social, and emotional needs of the student, to redirect the student to more appropriate behavior, and to mitigate the likelihood of additional behavioral problems and suspensions. General education candidates who had been suspended at least once, who had exhibited on-going problems of misconduct, and who were both willing and capable of responding to the IRS-RISC program qualified. These students self-monitored their progress along with their parents and teachers through a behavioral-modification point system and daily evaluation or anecdotal sheets. (see Appendix D)

Description of Selected Solution

The most ambitious venture was establishing an acceptable and uniform strategy for the channeling of candidates remanded to IRS-RISC. Although each dean and assistant-principal was encouraged to submit the names of potential assignees from their respective 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, exclusive of special education pupils, a single key figure was needed to make the final decision; the author and mentor of the program, consequently, made all final selections. Predicated on an impending suspense and interviews with the candidates and their parents (see Appendix H), no more than 10 pupils of the middle school were chosen at any time. Though

the proposal stipulated "no more than 15 students" would partake in the IRS-RISC project, (see Appendix A) the principal had suggested and the superintendent had verbally approved to limit the target population to 10 suspendees at any given time. Other preimplementation proposal changes entailed eliminating both the attitudinal-measurement-objective as well as the special-educational-referral objective for district purposes (see Appendix A). It was believed that the the policy of "total inclusion", directed toward special education recipients and initiated in the spring of 1992, would invalidate the findings of the project.

Both the candidate as well as the parents were offered the option of a recorded, principal's 1-to-5 day suspension as a result of the learner's most recent infraction, or, an unrecorded IRS-RISC program of uninterrupted schooling and guidance, terminating with the acquisition of 750 points (see Appendix B) and the approval of the teachers-in-charge, for a minimum retention of 10 school days. Under no condition would the assignee be retained longer than 15 school days or a maximum of 3 weeks. Rooted in the practices of behavioral modification, the point system reflected the academic accomplishments, behavior, and attitude of the pupil, was monitored by each individual learner and was shared with their respective parents or guardians. (see Appendices C and D) Students who acquired between 24-40 points in behavior during the morning periods, 1-to-4, were entitled to free-time during the lunch period, or such choices as television, walkman, or game privileges, in contrast to those who failed to reach 15 points in behavior; the latter was asked to read for the remainder of the lunch period. Upon completion of the program an evaluation was forwarded to the dean whereby recommendations inclusive of school guidance, individual and/or family counseling, with/without outside

support agencies, tutoring, change of class, or a special education referral were made. (see Appendix E) Respective subject teachers were consulted concerning proposed class changes of the IRS-RISC candidate two weeks after the completion of the program. Before any changes were executed the input of all respective teachers was sought; the final decision, however, inevitably rested with the on-grade assistant principal.

A contingency contract (see Appendix B) was signed at the conclusion of the presuspense conference by the candidate, parent(s), and writer. It contained the proviso that the parent agreed to remove the child from the classroom if the child disregarded the rules and regulations setforth or acted in a rambunctious manner; the principal's suspension subsequently became effective immediately. The contingency contract outlined the expectations, philosophy, rules and regulations, reciprocal rights of the school, parent, and student together with the time limit which was executed by the two teachers-in-charge, pupil, and parent.

Records of the IRS-RISC pupil were forwarded to and studied by the two suspense teachers-in-charge (STC) of the program. The academic STC served as the scholastic overseer, tutored when necessary, implemented the assignments procured by the writer (see Appendix K). The guidance teacher conducted the rehabilitation portion of the program, introduced role-playing, peer-mediation, and encouraged free-talk. Lessons from the Impact program, a self-esteem based skill development program that was designed by Dunne, Schilling, and Cowan in 1990 served as the guidance and rehabilitative model. In order to redirect the student to appropriate behavior which in turn was expected to lead to success in school as well as evoke the maximum affect in the shortest period of time, isolation from the student body was required, inclusive of lunch. A

basement classroom located apart from the general flow of traffic and separated from the activities of the student-body was chosen as the site of the IRS-RISC program. Lunches were obtained and delivered by school monitors; a third teacher was assigned to supervise the lunch period. The same rules governing line-up, attendance-late policies, and lunch privileges were strictly observed; free and/or reduced lunch privileges were honored. In addition, security guards were alerted to serve the STC at a moment's notice in case of an emergency. A telephone, television, VCR, computer, 10 carrel desks, a reference section of 10 open book cases, 10 student lockers, a teacher's desk, and a conference table comprised the IRS plant as designed by the author. Immediately after the signing of the contingency contract by the suspensee-candidate, parent, dean, and/or author, the pretest student questionnaire (see Appendix F) was administered.

This project was expected to succeed because of five main factors: (a) the philosophy, rules, and conditions of respective responsibilities were discussed, clarified, freely accepted, and reiterated in writing via a contingency contract by the concerned parties as a viable alternative to a recorded suspension and interrupted educational process; (b) IRS teachers, subject teachers, and administrators had input concerning the academics, evaluation, disposition, and follow-up of each pupil; (c) via adequate funding, the additional 1.4 on-line staff teachers were secured from the district prior to implementation thereby assuring that the original design would be implemented, uniform standards would be maintained throughout implementation, and the staff members would not assume an additional assignment; (d) alternative strategies of communication were being introduced among suspense-students who were recidivists, who resorted to fighting as the primary

means to settling differences and confrontation, and who needed a nonviolent strategy to diffuse argumentation and avert gang violence; and (e) the strategies implemented by IRS that captured the philosophy proposed by MacIver (1990) as well as the Chancellor (Memorandum No. 33, 1990-1991) were welcomed by the young adolescents and their parents insofar as the academic, social, and emotional needs of the student were ascertained and addressed.

Procedures Prior to Implementation

School conferences were held with an interdisciplinary team of on-grade principal assistants, on-grade guidance counselors, the author as dean, and respective subject teachers in order to focus upon the criteria of probable candidates that would most profit from the perceived remedial strategies. Research concerning the specific guidance components and rehabilitative materials was sought, analyzed, and secured.

Posting of the two IRS-RISC positions, with the tacit approval of the teacher's union representative, and interviewing the staff applicants in order to secure the needed professional balance of personalities and commitment to the project was exercised by the principal. In addition, the soliciting and hiring of two additional staff members in order to fill the vacancies engendered by the IRS-RISC program was undertaken by the school principal.

The author attempted to design the facility, acquire the necessary furniture from the surrounding high schools, sequestered needed materials, books, and audio-visual aids, selected an appropriate syllabus inclusive of lessons from the

Impact program, and promoted the philosophy of the project among the faculty members of the school. The entire faculty was apprised of the progress through staff meetings. Their input was encouraged so that each member of the staff would feel as a contributor to its formation.

Brainstorming with the suspense teachers-in-charge (STC) in order to acquire their input and share an interchange of the author's proposed ideas was necessary so that all parties would feel comfortable with its implementation. Meeting with the other deans in order to establish the criteria and perimeters by which the students were to be chosen from the 7th and 8th grades was essential to reinforce uniformity and avoid misunderstanding and future confrontations. For example, the deans agreed that the selection of candidates would be based on the student's immediate suspendable infraction, on-going record of infractions, and their personal recommendations. These recommendation were made via a review of the student's records, both anecdotal and confidential. It was unequivically acknowledged, however, that the final decision would rest with the author.

It was also advantageous to create an acceptable contingency contract, a practical format used for the intake or presuspense IRS-RISC interviews, and a simple self-efficacy monitoring strategy or point system in behalf of the students and their parents. An evaluation survey disseminated among the respective subject teachers and a pretest-posttest questionnaire comparing student attitudinal changes was also designed by the author and used as tools of measurement.

Upon acquiring the basic objectives, method of execution, data analysis techniques, and instruments of measurement, the writer presented the aforementioned to the principal for approval. Designed in three phases; preparation,

implementation, and evaluation stages, the preparation stage encompassed a six month on-going selection of students based on the agreed criteria, the implementation included the guidance curriculum inclusive of communication skills and a progress report at the close of the school year in belhalf of the principal, administrative staff, faculty and district superintendent, and the evaluation stage was used for posttesting and analyzing the results of the project.

Report of Action Taken

During the preparatory stage the positions of the suspense teachers-in-charge (STC) were posted in accordance with the UFT contract regulations. Interviews of the candidates were conducted by the principal whereby the author's opinion was elicited after the final selectees were made. The author was particularly pleased with the teacher-in-charge of academics as the experienced educator was structured, well organized, and bilingual. The guidance selectee was known by the pupils as an approachable, communicable professional. Supportiveness of the principal was initially evident when the writer was invited to address an administrative conference in order to explain the aims of the program; a meeting attended by the principal, 3 assistant principals, 2 deans in addition to the author, and a special education supervisor. The sixth grade assistant principal and member of the author's triage team selected a basement-room in the main building for the implementation of the program. Since it was separated from the flow of pupil traffic, it satisfied the isolation contingency of the IRS-RISC program.

Many individual meetings and three distinct group conferences were subsequently conducted by the author; one conference was held with the suspense teachers-in-charge, another with the respective deans of the 7th and 8th grades, and the third with all the members of the administrative body or cabinet. Input, feedback, and some modifications resulted.

Neither STC was interested in conducting the captive lunch period with the IRS-RISC students. Therefore, a third teacher was assigned an administrative duty by the principal whereby the appointed teacher was directed to secure the student-lunches and supervise the pupils at lunchtime. The deans objected to waiting until the following Monday in order to place an IRS-RISC candidate in the in-room suspension. It was argued that the interim period would induce truancy, exacerbate the inappropriate behavior of the youngster, or become a burden to the respective dean. It was agreed, therefore, that the student would enter the program immediately after the intake was completed by the writer and the contingency contract was signed by parent, student, and the author. The contingency contract was altered to reflect the entry date and other minor changes of the in-room suspension (compare Appendix B with Appendix I). Procrastination was averted. The IRS-RISC was tauted as a privilege and alternative to a principal's suspension. If a parent failed to appear at a scheduled presuspense conference or any of the parties in question hesitated to sign the contingency contract during the conference intake, the principal's suspension was immediately enforced.

The supervisor of special education insisted that special education pupils should be incorporated into the program. The writer successfully maintained that educators such as Vincent and Bostdorff (1990) did not advocate combining the special education populace with general

educational students as the problems of the former required different strategies in order to successfully address their academic and emotional needs. Not wishing to jeopardize the implementation of the project, the author reluctantly agreed to a compromise; "at-risk" children were included as eligible candidates of the IRS-RISC program.

Other compromises ensued. A walkie-talkie was substituted for a telephone, no television monitor or VCR was secured for the IRS-RISC on a permanent basis, and all but one of the carrel desks were abandoned. The pupils refused to function at the designed desks. They found them too restrictive. Consequently, only one was retained and was used upon student request.

Much of the previously designed program was honored. Children were admitted after the intake (inclusive of record perusal and parental interview) and the signing of the contingency contract. Individual lockers and desks were assigned by the STC, orientation was conducted by the writer and reenforced by the STC, and student (pretest) questionnaires that were initially conducted by the writer were exclusively conducted by the academic STC. Excellent daily communication between the author and the academic STC concerning the progress of the participants contributed to the ongoing stability of the program. At no time were there more than 10 pupils in the IRS-RISC. program; all referring parties honored the author's refusal to admit additional candidates when the maximum number of IRS-RISC candidates was realized. No dean or subject teacher attempted to challenge the writer's stance.

Some challenges were unexpected and had to be resolved. For example, the following criteria of the program was agreed upon during the administrative conferences, namely, (a) the candidate had to serve one principal's suspension before

becoming eligible for the program, (b) the pupil must commit a suspendable infraction before becoming eligible for the IRS RISC program, (c) both the parent and child, collectively, must be given the option to freely enter the program or be given the suspense alternative, (d) the child would risk suspense if not adhering to the terms of the contingency contract, (e) the parent must be made available and willing to secure the child if called upon wherein the original suspense would become effective, and (f) one STC would be responsible for the predetermined academics of subject teachers and the other STC would be responsible for the teaching of the guidance component as designed by the author. However, one of the assistant principals was most uncooperative. The administrator exerted his authority by indiscriminately placing children into the IRS-RISC room. Either the students were not previously suspended or their impending infraction was not suspendable. In one case, the student returned from a suspension and the assistant principal ordered the pupil to IRS-RISC as a continued form of punishment This had been ordered despite the academic STC's protestations. If permitted to continue, the administrator's actions would have jeopardized the design of the program. The supervisor in question had little faith in the project's success and perceived it as a convenient "dumping ground" to be used as a disciplinary expediency. Upon apprising the principal of the irregularities, a cabinet meeting was called whereby every administrator was ordered to conform to the rules and regulations of the program.

In addition, the teacher-in-charge of guidance deleted the communication-skills component from the guidance curriculum. Frequently absent and disenchanted with the students' attentiveness, the guidance STC took the children to the gym whenever the gym was unoccupied. His rationale was that the children had to "unwind." Though the author protested,

the STC felt the pupils were entitled to a "reward" for strictly adhering to the rules of the program. Upon protesting, an argument transpired whereby the author's authority was challenged and the soundness of the project, once again, questioned. The academic STC supported the writer. The principal intervened and the original terms of the contingency contract were honored. In short, the program had to be continually supervised for unanticipated deviations, the concepts of rehabilitation and guidance reiterated and supervised, and the punitive aspect of the individual's infraction minimized.

At mid-point, superintendent suspensions had been minimal, principal suspensions and teacher referrals had substantially decreased, and more appropriate placements of pupils due to the recommendations of the academic STC had contributed to an improved academic average of individual students. The writer found networking with the parents, daily communication with members of the targeted population, and establishing a cooperative and positive rapport with the STC's invaluable to the success of the program. Parents who were supportive played an integral role in their child's progress and subsequent completion of the IRS-RISC program. Not all candidates entering the program completed the program; subsequent suspenses ensued.

The program attracted much attention. The pupils cartooned it in their school newspaper as "the jail," most of the students referred to it as "the hole," and its popularity gained recognition in the student's yearbook. Parents praised it as a turning point in their child's life. Teacher's applauded the changes recommended by the teachers-in-charge. Most special education teachers requested a similar program for the children of special education, and members of the guidance department

condemned the use of the word "rehabilitation" suggesting the word "renewal." as the more appropriate of the two.

Two unexpected outcomes transpired by midpoint of implementation. The parent-teacher's association awarded the writer a mini-grant of $200.00 in recognition of the work achieved in promoting positive communication skills among the pubescent. As a result the writer was given the opportunity to address the parents and further describe the concept as well as the immediate findings of IRS-RISC in detail. Secondly, since the suspensions of the school decreased, the program was visited in its second month of implementation by the director of crisis intervention of the district. At the beginning of the fourth month of implementation the assistant superintendent of the author's district, 3 principals of middle schools within the district, and the director of guidance of another district visited the writer's school in order to observe, inquire, and request information concerning its implementation and dissemination to others.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

In order to thwart an increasing number of principal suspensions resulting from inappropriate student conduct a 15 day in-room suspension strategy, unprecedented in duration, was designed. Its distinguishing features entailed a central figure who predetermined the candidates via a pre-suspense interview, parental-student involvement and choice, and the avoidance of an impending principal's suspension. A contingency contract delineated the conditions which necessitated pupil isolation, promoted structure and a guidance curriculum featuring communication skills, and introduced, through a point system, a behavioral modification strategy that conceivably reduced the duration of the in-room suspense to 10 school days. The program was rehabilitative rather than punitive in design.

Results as shown for each of the objectives indicate IRS-RISC effectiveness as well as the affect of student isolation, networking among parents as well as students, and the educational impact of one-on-one tutoring.

Objective One:

There will be a 25% decrease in principal suspensions for the school year 1992-1993, in contrast to principal suspensions of the corresponding months of the baseline year 1991-1992, among the general-educational students. The official suspensions that were logged at the practicum site, annotated at the district and central board of education offices served as the evaluation tools of measurement.

The tabulated results acquired from the aforementioned suspense records depicted on Table 2 indicated that this objective was not satisfactorily met.

Table 2

Contrasting Principal Suspensions Between the Baseline Months of 1991-1992 and the Corresponding Months of 1992-1993

	1991-1992 Months		1992-1993 Months	
(n=6)				
1	March	= 59	March	= 55
2	April	= 9	April	= 27
3	May	= 34	May	= 39
4	June	= 11	June	= 26
5	Sept.	= 18	Sept.	= 1
6	Oct.	= 46	Oct.	= 16
	Total	= 177	Total	= 164

Note. Above suspensions are for general education students.

When contrasting the total number of suspensions that were executed during the baseline period and the corresponding period of implementation a decrease of 7% was attained. In order to have successfully demonstrated the anticipated positive effect IRS-RISC should have had upon enforceable suspenses, as designed by the author, a 25% suspense reduction or approximately 44 fewer suspenses were needed; 13 fewer suspenses were realized. The author contends that a minimum decrease of 25% would have been effected had the following conditions not existed: (a) The target population increased by approximately 200 students between the baseline and implementation periods as shown in Figure 1, (b) The program was not relegated exclusively to the general education populace; the author reluctantly admitted at-risk students into the program, and (c) the author should not have permitted suspense candidates who harbored reservations to enter the program.

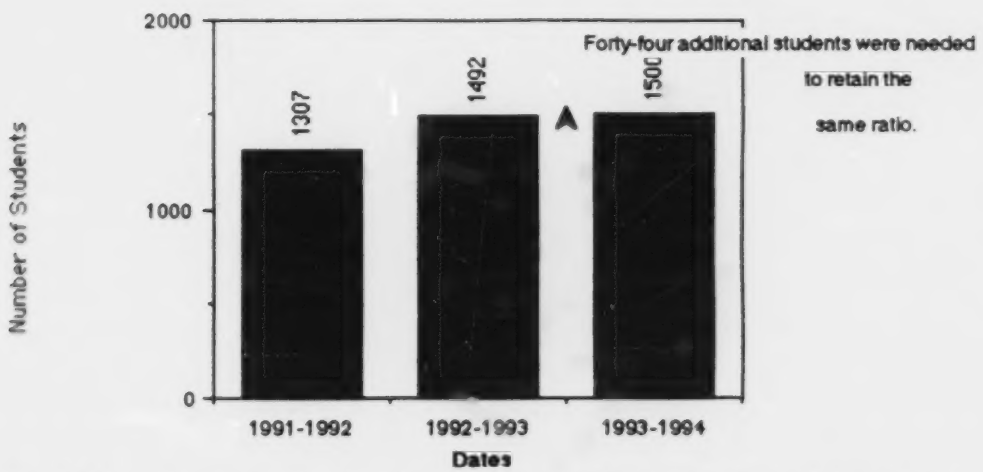


FIGURE 1. Contrasting the increased number of students between the baseline (1992) and implementation periods (1993) illustrated a change in the independent (student) variable.

Many at-risk students were found to have been prematurely decertified from special education upon graduating from elementary schools. Others were not provided with the cascade of support services needed to sustain a successful matriculation into general education and/or the newly acquired environment of middle school. Promulgating the policy of "total inclusion", city officials and special education district supervisors substantiated questionable and unprecedented student placements as testimonial to their adherence to the philosophical tenets emanating from PI 92-142, namely, "the least restrictive environment" provision in education. Consequently, the young learners were not placed in the "most facilitative environment" which more aptly embodied that provision's intent. In reality, budgetary costs and deficits served as an ulterior motive. Parents who considered special education as a social stigma welcomed the inclusion, decertification, and admittance into general education; others unquestionably relied upon the professional judgment of educators. Learning disabled students were afforded resource and/or resource and counseling in lieu of self-contained classes that would have more appropriately serviced their needs. One student was advanced without academic substantiation from the 4th grade in elementary school to the practicum site's 6th grade in middle school. The guise that he was physically too big to remain in elementary school satisfied the parent. Upon a Type III re-evaluation, the 5' 1" child was remanded to a self-contained class for the emotional behavioral disordered (E/BD) and transferred to another elementary school within the district. Students such as the one described were among the earlier suspense and IRS-RISC candidates. Not being apprised of their special needs the author admitted such students into the program; the generated findings were consequently skewed.

The writer concurs with educators Vincent and Bostdorff (1990) who discouraged combining special and general education pupils when conducting experimental strategies; the problems of the IRS-RISC candidates were exacerbated by the unconventional behavior of the attending at-risk pupils. The STC diverted an inordinate amount of attention in behalf of the at-risk student; attention that should have been relegated to the general education learners. The former required different strategies in order to successfully address their academic and emotional needs. The latter were deprived of quality time. Fourteen of the 55 participants failed to complete the IRS-RISC program; 13 of the 14 participants were at-risk students who were subsequently suspended, suspended and later remanded to self-contained classes at the practicum site, or suspended and later transferred to other self-contained or residential facilities.

Parents most often favored the unrecorded IRS-RISC program in lieu of a recorded principal's suspension for the following reasons: (a) It permitted an uninterrupted education, needed supervision, and a possible resolution to the inappropriate behavior in behalf of the child; (b) It removed the financial burden from responsible single-parents who otherwise had to remain home or obtain adequate supervision for their offspring; c) It alleviated the apprehension experienced among parents who were forced to leave the young adult home, alone and unsupervised; and (d) The IRS-RISC provided the involved parent with new insights and parenting skills through their daily communication with the STC. Many parents who were willing but unable to rectify the problems experienced by their children continually sought untried strategies. The IRS-RISC offered an alternative to the customary punitive approach to addressing unacceptable conduct. It provided the deans with another tool, greater flexibility, and a rehabilitative technique in dealing with misconduct. Embracing

the pedagogical separation design whereby the offender is removed socially as a symbol of disapproval, the candidate's needs, nevertheless, were being met through individual tutoring and monitoring. It was tantamount to placing a child under a microscope and ascertaining his academic, social, and emotional strengths and weaknesses. Realizing the IRS-RISC advantages in contrast to a formal suspense, parents coaxed, cajoled, and even resorted to threats and bribery in order to extract a written consent from their progeny. The author, upon witnessing the reluctance of the candidate, should not have permitted the unwilling candidate into the program.

When the general education students willingly accepted the conditions of the program positive reenforcement was observed. The IRS-RISC exceeded the benefits of a small, self-contained classroom insofar as the STC was neither responsible for grading the child academically nor placing academic demands upon the child. The student's defenses were relaxed and the participant could act without pressure, constraint, or fear of failure and/or reprisals. Since the STC could observe the participant as an individual within a heterogeneous group of peers, who differed in age, sex, and abilities, the IRS-RISC was analogous to the one-on-one tutoring and/or individual counseling provided by support services while serving as a forum for group guidance and peer venting.

In keeping with Hegne (1987), Rood (1989), and Overman (1979) who advocated, parental involvement and daily communication, the author found that the cooperative youngsters whose parents sincerely supported and encouraged their children on a daily basis benefitted the most from the program; the reluctant participant and/or indifferent parent faltered.

The IRS-RISC provided greater flexibility and served as an alternative to formal suspensions. Reflecting an extended

"time-out" different insights of the participant were gained by the STC. A bonding was created between the youngster and educator. So strong was this bonding that several of the students pleaded to remain at IRS-RISC. They expressed apprehension, peer reprisals, and a return to poor academic patterns of behavior. Some immediate problems experienced by the suspendee were addressed. When solutions were not possible alternatives and choices were presented in behalf of the participant. By the end of the IRS-RISC period of implementation, a principal suspense decrease was observed (as Illustrated in Table 2) for the first time in three years. This was particularly encouraging since two middle schools within the district experienced a continued increase of principal suspensions. Though the objective was not met, the author believes the IRS-RISC strategy contributed to the decrease of principal suspensions.

Objective Two:

There will be a 15% decrease of repeat suspense-offenders, after attending the IRS-RISC program, during the period of implementation in 1993, in contrast to the repeat-offenders who were not privy to the program, during the corresponding months of the baseline year in 1992.

Table 3 mirrors the number of students whose continued inappropriate conduct warranted the execution of another suspense. The differences indicated a decrease of 56% between the baseline period which took place from March through June of the school year 1991-1992, the school months of September and October of the school year 1993-1994; and the corresponding period of implementation, during the school years 1992-1993, 1993-1994. The writer's objective was not only met but exceeded the projected goals by 41% above that which was anticipated.

Table 3

Comparing the Number of Repeat Suspense-Offenders

Baseline year 1992			Implementation year 1993		
Month	S	R	Month	S	R
(n=1307)			(n=1492)		
March	54	16	March	55	5
April	9	5	April	27	3
May	34	6	May	39	4
June	11	0	June	26	3
Sept.	18	5	Sept.	1	0
Oct.	46	2	Oct.	16	0
Totals =	172	34	Totals =	164	15

Note. S = suspendees; R = Repeat suspendees; n= approximation of the total number of registered students at the practicum site.

During the baseline period 34 of the 172 suspended students received additional suspensions; 15 of the 164 students suspended during the period of implementation were likewise suspended more than once. Fifty-Six percent fewer students were suspended for the second time during the IRS-RISC period of implementation than during the corresponding baseline period. There were less than 10% repeat suspendees during the IRS-RISC period of implementation.

Mitigating circumstances accounted for the suspense repetition of several IRS-RISC candidates. The guidance segment of the program which was designed by the writer was neither uniformly nor properly administered at all times. There was a period of time in which the guidance STC teacher attempted to take the path of least resistance. Children were taken to the gym when the gym was available, no speakers were recruited in compliance with the suggested guidance curriculum, and appropriate audio-visual aid materials that would have fostered communication skills were never secured. Until the condition was addressed and corrected a segment of the IRS-RISC participants never received the communication skills, guidance component, or nurturing strategies as designed. In addition, two learners were indiscriminately and inappropriately placed into IRS-RISC by an administrator bypassing the writer and standard procedures. Until the situation was rectified with the assistance of the principal the purpose of the program was challenged and the accruing student-benefits diminished.

Sullivan (1989) unequivocally expressed the need for strong staff commitment as the basis of any successful in-room suspension. The author not only affirms Sullivan's premise but urges consistency, uniformity, and frequent "watchdog" checks to scrutinize and address the deviations, unanticipated shortcomings and need for reenforcement and praise among staff, administrators, and student-body.

Objective Three:

Those students attending the IRS-RISC program will demonstrate a 25% referral-submission decrease, during a 2 month period following the completion of the program in comparison to the number of individual referrals received by the dean(s), during the baseline period, 2 months prior to the IRS-RISC attendance.

A total referral decrease of 30% maybe evidenced via Tables 4, 5, and 6, whereby the referral-submissions of grades 6, 7, and 8 are enumerated respectively. Students of grade 6 realized a 37% decrease, grade 7 pupils reduced their referrals by 18%, and learners of grade 8 diminished their referrals by 34% thereby affording a total reduction of 30%. Exceeding the author's third objective of a 25% referral-submission reduction, the author's third objective was successfully realized. (see Figure 2)

All dated referral slips were forwarded upon request to the author by the respective deans; the deans kept all on-grade pupil referrals as a matter of record. Compiled in individual student-folders the referrals served to review past and present individual behavior patterns. Each referral contained the annotated infraction of the student. Its contents became a matter of record and a tool of measurement. Tables 4, 5, and 6 mirror the number of referrals received by each adolescent 2 months prior to becoming a nominee of IRS-RISC and 2 months after attending the IRS-RISC program. Fewer referral-submissions were noted during the month immediately following the completion of the program in contrast to the increased number of referral-submissions posted during the subsequent month.

Forty-one of the 55 candidates successfully completed the program. Six of the 29 sixth graders who were admitted into the IRS-RISC program were suspended and therefore discharged before completing the program; 2 of the 6 suspendees were subsequently placed into special education classes. Among the 15 participating seventh graders, 5 were disqualified; 4 were suspended and discharged, 1 was inappropriately admitted and released. Only 8 of the 11 eighth graders successfully completed the program; 2 were suspended, the third was transferred to another school.

Table 4

Referral-Submission Comparisons of Sixth Grade IRS-RISC Participants

Pupil	PreIRS RISC			PostIRS-RISC		
(n=29)	month 1	month 2	Total	month 1	month 2	Total
6- 1	6	12	18	2	5	7
6- 2	7	3	10	1	3	4
6- 3	2	4	6	1	1	2
6- 4	3	1	4	0	1	1
6- 5 * + **						
6- 6	7	5	12	0	5	5
6- 7	1	2	3	0	0	0
6- 8	4	5	9	4	9	13
6- 9	3	5	8	1	2	3
6-10	3	4	7	0	4	4
6-11	5	8	13	1	5	6
6-12	3	2	5	1	1	2
6-13	1	4	5	2	3	5
6-14 *						
6-15	3	4	7	4	8	12
6-16 * + **						
6-17 *						
6-18	2	1	3	1	1	2
6-19 *						
6-20	5	6	11	2	5	7
6-21	2	2	4	0	2	2
6-22 *						
6-23	5	1	6	3	3	6
6-24	2	5	7	0	0	0
6-25	6	7	13	2	3	5
6-26	3	1	4	1	3	4
6-27	2	3	5	0	4	4
6-28	13	12	25	7	9	16
6-29	7	1	8	5	6	11
			Total= 193			Total =121

Note. *= suspended; **=Transferred to a special education class.

Table 5

Referral Submission Comparisons of Seventh Grade IRS-RISC Participants

Pupil	PreIRS RISC			PostIRS-RISC		
(n=15)	month 1	month 2	Total	month 1	month 2	Total
7- 1	4	4	8	2	4	6
7- 2	*					
7- 3	4	5	9	2	4	6
7- 4	7	10	17	5	8	13
7- 5	*					
7- 6	2	3	5	0	2	2
7- 7	*					
7- 8	4	7	11	4	4	8
7- 9	*					
7-10	3	3	6	5	4	9
7-11	1	4	5	3	4	7
7-12	**					
7-13	2	3	5	2	2	4
7-14	3	5	8	2	5	7
7-15	7	3	10	1	6	7
			Total = 84			Total = 69

Note. * = Student was suspended; ** = student was improperly admitted and therefore released from the IRS-RISC program.

Table 6

Referral Submission Comparisons of Eighth Grade IRS-RISC Participants

Pupil	PreIRS RISC			PostIRS-RISC		
(n=11)	month 1	month 2	Total	month 1	month 2	Total
8- 1	6	6	12	3	3	6
8- 2	5	2	7	1	4	5
8- 3 *	. . . . .					
8- 4	4	4	8	0	2	2
8- 5	2	3	5	1	4	5
8- 6	4	4	8	1	4	5
8- 7 **	. . . . .					
8- 8 *	. . . . .					
8- 9	3	2	5	3	1	4
8-10	3	3	6	2	3	5
8-11	7	10	17	6	7	13
			Total= 68			Total= 45

Note. *= Student was suspended and did not complete the IRS-RISC program; **= student was transferred to a special education class at another school.

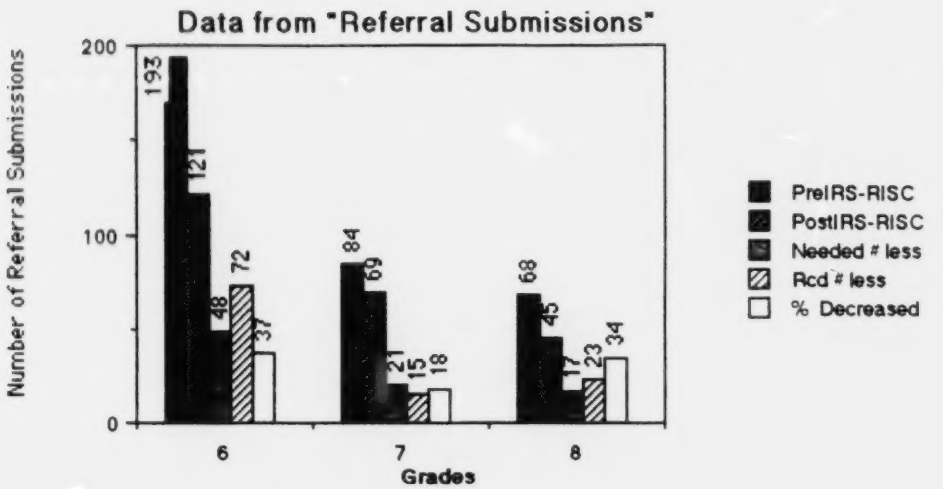


Figure 2. The comparison of referral submissions 2 months prior to IRS-RISC and 2 months subsequent to IRS-RISC implementation demonstrated a 30% reduction in referral submissions among the students of the practicum site.

Upon completion of the program students were issued a Student Progress Sheet (SPS) (see Appendix J) by the writer. For one cycle or 6 school days the participant's academic progress and behavioral patterns were monitored by subject teachers, parent(s), and the dean. Teachers evaluated, commented, and graded "the progress" of the former IRS-RISC participant. A parental signature was required daily in order to ensure continued parental involvement. Both the re-adjustment to general education as well as the benefits derived from the SPS contributed to the positive changes during the first month ensuing IRS-RISC. The SPS served as a support system for those who attempted to ameliorate former patterns of unacceptable behavior; indifferent students and/or indifferent parents

behavior; indifferent students and/or indifferent parents discarded the use and importance of the SPS. On the other hand, parents of 5 of the 41 IRS-RISC candidates requested the continuance of the SPS when their children displayed signs of academic or behavioral deterioration.

Objective Four:

There will be an academic grade-average increase of 10% among the major subjects of those students who complete the IRS-RISC program, during the following quarterly-marking period when comparing the grade-average of the the baseline period, or quarterly-marking period prior to attending IRS-RISC.

The author computed the academic averages of the major subjects of each IRS-RISC candidate by grade. Table 7 reflects the respective grade average changes of grades 6, 7, and 8 respectively; each average was cited to the nearest whole number. Figure 3 depicts the average grade differences found among the IRS-RISC candidates. The results indicated an academic increase of 2% among the sixth graders, a 7% increase among the seventh graders, and a 5% increase among the eighth graders for a total academic improvement of 4%. Academically, the students achieved 6% less than projected. The greatest individual increase was 28% (8-9); the highest percentage decrease was 15% (7-6). The fourth objective was not met.

Once the individual monitoring of the students ceased, via IRS-RISC or SPS's support services, most youngsters resorted to their former academic patterns. While many students returned to their classes better prepared than at any other time during the course of the term their advantages soon dissipated when the structure and individual attention once provided by the STC no longer existed. Frustrated by their short-lived academic success they reverted to their former academic patterns of indifference.

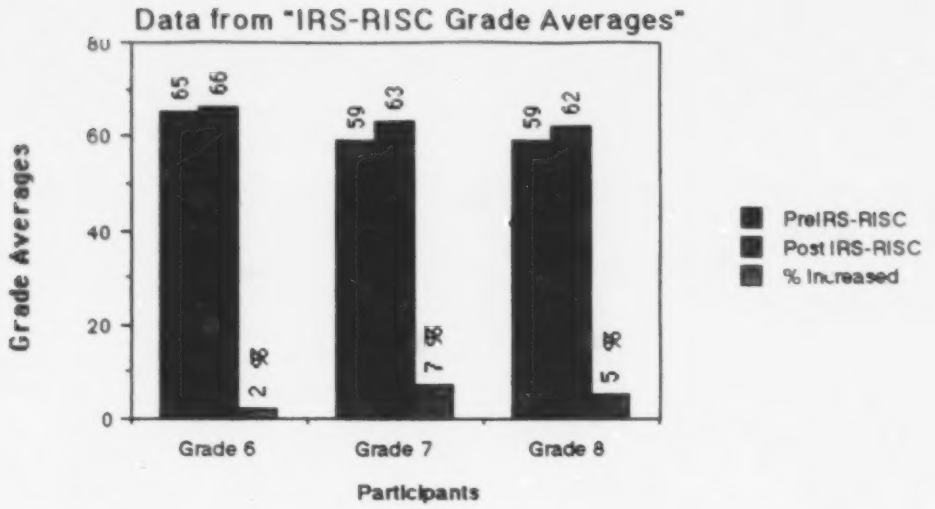
Table 7

Academic Grade Averages Among Participants of IRS-RISC

Grade 6			Grade 7			Grade 8		
Pupil (n=29)	Pre	Post	Pupil (n=15)	Pre	Post	Pupil (n=11)	Pre	Post
6- 1	77	79	7- 1	57	59	8- 1	55	55
6- 2	63	64	7- 2	*	. . . . .	8- 2	65	63
6- 3	59	72	7- 3	57	67	8- 3	*	. . . . .
6- 4	68	73	7- 4	55	73	8- 4	61	63
6- 5	* + **	. . . . .	7- 5	*	. . . . .	8- 5	60	57
6- 6	63	70	7- 6	65	55	8- 6	63	68
6- 7	66	51	7- 7	*	. . . . .	8- 7	**	. . . . .
6- 8	57	67	7- 8	57	59	8- 8	*	. . . . .
6- 9	61	62	7- 9	*	. . . . .	8- 9	57	73
6-10	70	70	7-10	59	62	8-10	55	58
6-11	73	70	7-11	57	55	8-11	55	55
6-12	67	74	7-12	***	. . . .	Aver.=	59	62
6-13	55	57	7-13	65	68			
6-14	*	. . . . .	7-14	57	68			
6-15	67	63	7-15	59	61			
6-16	* + **	. . . . .	Aver. =	59	63			
6-17	*	. . . . .						
6-18	63	57						
6-19	*	. . . . .						
6-20	59	73						
6-21	62	62						
6-22	*	. . . . .						
6-23	55	61						
6-24	55	66						
6-25	70	60						
6-26	72	66						
6-27	55	55						
6-28	86	79						
6-29	65	65						
Aver. =	65	66						

Note. * = suspended; ** = transferred to special education; *** = pupil was improperly admitted and therefore released from IRS-RISC.

Figure 3



Discussion

For those disenchanted with suspension as a recourse to inappropriate behavior IRS-RISC offered another option. This in-room suspense incorporated the principles advocated by Diem (1988) and his recommendation for a central administrative figure; Sullivan's (1989) suggestion to limit suspense nominee's to a particular rather than a myriad of offenses; Johnston's (1989) plea for structure; Rekoske's (1993) advice advocating student accountability, and Hegne (1987), Overman (1979), and Rood's (1989) urgings for parental involvement. It removed the stigma of a punitively recorded suspense and replaced it with a positive strategy intended to restructure behavior. Its uniqueness was based upon five essential features (a) choice exercised by all parties to the suspense, (b) duration of the in-

assignee, (d) a structured pedagogy that featured peer isolation, and (e) a remedial segment within the guidance curriculum that emphasized both decision-making as well as communication skills. Each of the five entities was an integral component of the design and of equal importance. The absence or variance of any one segment negatively effected the results of the program and/or its potential benefactors.

The term 'remediate' rather than 'rehabilitate' more aptly applied to IRS-RISC. The period of implementation was too brief to have had any sustained modification upon the candidates' posture. Consequently, grade averages were negligibly improved and the number of principal suspenses was not considerably amended. Attitudes were, however, positively altered. Referral submissions and repeat suspense offenders were reduced beyond the author's expectations. The unprecedented opportunity shared by the STCs in observing individual pupils for long periods of time, under a myriad of circumstances, enabled the STCs to objectively evaluate a candidate's academic and behavioral acumen, recommend needed changes, and serve as an influential party in channeling students to more appropriate classes (see Appendix E). The STCs played a major role in influencing a student's perception of self and school, in improving academic organizational skills, in exposing an adolescent to alternatives in decision-making challenges, and in encouraging greater parental cooperation. The selections of the STC had correspondingly attributed to the success of this program. The effectual STC created a bonding with the assignees and provided the needed nurturing, as in the case of the academic IRS-RISC STC; a less effectual STC will fail to service the children as intended. The STCs must be reliable, consistent, and tirelessly patient in fulfilling the tenets of the project. Since IRS-RISC was presented to the candidates as a privilege, both staff and

candidate should have been committed and dedicated to fulfilling the conditions setforth in the aforementioned contingency contract (see Appendix I). When the conditions were fulfilled effective change was remonstrated; when either pupil, STC, or parent failed to comply to the rudiments of the in-room, the child's difficulties were exacerbated.

Fighting reflected the most common grounds for initiating a student's suspense; intimidation, stealing, and verbal challenges frequently preceded altercations. When weaponry such as knives or guns were employed a superintendent rather than a principal's suspension was mandatory. Peer "venting" and individual counseling conducted as one of the IRS-RISC strategies effectively reduced the bellicosity among the IRS-RISC participants. During the baseline period 11 students received superintendent suspensions; during the period of implementation only 5 students received superintendent suspensions. A 55% improvement among superintendent suspensions was realized.

In addition to influencing the conduct of children, the program provided the deans with another tool along with their reservoir of detentions. Perceived as a pedagogical design that attempts to countermeasure unacceptable behavior and sustain educational standards before resorting to the ultimate suspense procedure, it should be employed as a salutary schema rather than a means of punishment; punishment associated with the imposition of suspense which has come to be regarded with disdain, diminishing effectiveness, and indiscriminate use of brandish empowerment. It is the author's belief that anytime an effective corrective technique can be implemented to thwart inveterate misconduct it should be utilized. Otherwise suspense is only warranted when a youngster is clearly a danger to himself, his instructors, and/or the student populace.

The incorrigible, criminally experienced, or morally

illiterate seldom elected the in-room suspense; ostracism from social interaction for a minimum of 10 school days was regarded as a greater consequence than the suspense. Those electing the recorded suspense perceived suspense shamelessly, flauntingly, and as a symbol of peer distinction. They were indifferent to school directives, undaunted by parental threats, and appeared contemptuous of the format. The student who realized his/her actions were unacceptable, was more confused than nonresponsive, and had unwillingly succumbed to peer pressure welcomed IRS-RISC as an opportunity to ameliorate inappropriate self-control and regain acceptance among those in authority both at school and within the home. For those students IRS-RISC served to redirect the learner to positive patterns of behavior. Johnston's (1989) premise that early intervention achieves greater positive result is not disputed. His inference to age, however, appeared inconsequential to the writer. The experience and attitude of the child was of greater importance in choosing IRS-RISC as an alternative to suspense than the respective ages of the participants. The most problematical were the least responsive to change. Sustained remediation was possible if appropriate support systems and STC recommendations were incorporated into the participant's program. Family counseling, program changes, SBST evaluations, and individual tutoring were among the STC's suggestions; all of which had been considered, few had been realized. Most often the "wait and see" approach was embraced by the concerned parties. Consequently, the surveys disseminated among the respective teachers (see appendix G) cited (a) temporary behavioral improvement with little to no sustained change, (b) parental networking depreciation upon the student's return to class, and (c) an eventual reversion to nonproductiveness

After evaluating the students' questionnaire (see Appendix

F) the author found little to no correlation between the students' academic performance and high self-esteem. Twenty-eight of the 41 students who completed the program manifested grandiose perceptions of themselves and their capabilities while, (a) oblivious to their academic shortcomings, (b) of the opinion they were extremely well liked by their peers of both genders, and (c) convinced their actions leading to misconduct were justified. Not minimizing the benefits of self-esteem, the communications skill segment attempted to balance the learner's personal sensitivities with the realistic benefits of personal satisfaction and achievement acquired through perseverance and eventual subject mastery.

Recommendations

IRS-RISC is recommended as an effective strategy among selective students of early pubescence who need individual guidance and countermeasures to combat unsolicited peer pressure, to remediate academic frustrations, and to articulate acceptable assertiveness. It is an excellent vehicle for the responsive disruptive. IRS-RISC not only curtails the escalation of festering problems that tend to breed violence but affords instructors the opportunity to revert to quality teaching techniques and standards of educational excellence which all too often had been abandoned and replaced with classroom management strategies of repetitive and boring seatwork in order to accommodate and control the unruly. This strategy is not recommended for the at-risk pupil, the seriously maladjusted, the emotionally disturbed or the incorrigible.

Once the philosophy of the program is established, conferenced, and accepted, the single director must implement the tenets of the program without deviation lest it becomes another

"dumping ground" for the disposing of incorrigibles at the convenience of staff or administrators. It is advisable to design a syllabus within the guidance segment of the program that addresses one particularly flagrant condition or unacceptable behavior in the school. Incorporate corrective strategies that will offer the assignees opportunities to vent, share common feelings, and display alternative, corrective responses. Individual attention depreciates if the ideal class-size exceeds 10 students. Most importantly select dedicated STCs that will consistently implement the program as directed throughout the course of the term.

IRS-RISC should not be viewed as a disciplinary luxury in contrast to fundamental educational priorities, increased expenditures, and immediate challenges. If America's future sincerely rests with its young, a cliche' promulgated by the National Research Council, than the number of students one reaches is insignificant to the relative success achieved by those successfully completing the program; a program that is an alternative to suspense.

Dissemination

Other than an attempt to publish the IRS-RISC findings, the writer is expected to forward the results to the superintendent of the district. If approved, it will be disseminated among the schools of the district, the teacher's union, and the central board of education. It is not unlikely that other deans and administrators will be encouraged to implement similar extended in-room suspense strategies. Supervisors of other districts have visited the practicum site, and have already requested IRS-RISC particulars.

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APPENDIX A

THE PROPOSAL

THE DAVID A. STEIN RIVERDALE J.H.S. 141

MELVIN KATZ, PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
Joseph Imperial
Ronald Lang
Sonia Rodriguez

DEANS
Ireneanne Novell
Richard Wendlinger
Byron Whitter

INTRODUCTION

Junior High School 141B presently services a myriad of students of heterogeneous ethnicity. Located in Community District 10 of the Bronx, the socioeconomic strata of the student population range from two-parent homes of the upper middle-class to single-parent domiciles of welfare recipients. The former may house one full time domestic; the latter is frequently unskilled, unemployed, and illiterate. Accommodating nearly 1,400 seventh, eighth, and ninth grade pupils, 200 of the 375 ninth-graders attend the Academy, an alternate educational facility or annex that is located three blocks south of the main building. The main building obliges students of all academic levels, the gifted, the average, and those needing remedial or bilingual studies. The author is dean of discipline of ninth grade students.

The young adults who range from 13 through 16 years of age constitute a body of 40.5% Hispanic, 20.6% Afro-American, 8.9% Asian, 29.6% Caucasian and 0.3 % Native American according to the Annual Census,Table A-2 of the School Profile, year 1990-91. As of March 12, 1992, 255 suspensions were executed among the three grade levels; the total number of student suspensions for the year 1990-91 totaled 262.

The efficacy of a suspense is not being challenged. It is however, an expediency that disrupts the learning process and places an excessive burden upon the parent as well. In keeping with the Superintendent's views that fewer suspensions serve a more meaningful purpose, a disciplinary program that is not only designed as an intermediary step to suspenses, but will also serve to rectify the common cause(s) of misconduct is being proposed. This alternative step to suspenses is entitled RISC whereby *remedial strategies* are sought through *isolation*, *structure* and *counseling* (both group and peer guidance as well as individual guidance).

II. STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description:

Approximately one third of J.H.S. 141's students are technically eligible for, but are not recipients of Chapter I assistance. These students are products of dysfunctional families, single-parented, and drug-infested homes who reside in the southerly, densely-populated areas of the district. These young adults are chronologically children who have had adult responsibilities imposed upon them. They have witnessed parents incarcerated and criminal brutalities pollute their neighborhoods. They arrive at school ill-prepared to learn because the lessons of survival or impending dangers from rival streetgangs preoccupy their thoughts. They are incapable of communicating with each other as well as those in authority in an acceptable manner. They neither understand nor respect the rules imposed upon them by the school. They challenge the authority of the classroom just as they challenge the authority of the streets. Their values are

askew. Education is not prioritized. Misconduct, aberrant behavior and suspensions ensue.

Problem Documentation:

As of March 12, 1992, of the 246 Principal suspensions, 43 were ninth grade suspenses. Divided fairly evenly by gender, 23 of the 43 suspenses were boys, 20 of the 43 young adults were girls. Physical fights were the chief cause of suspense as 20 of the 43 suspenses involved fights that could have been avoided. Ten of the fights were initiated through rumors or third party agitators. Records indicate 13 of the 20 fights involved boys (one of which had a weapon) 7 of the 20 were girls (2 of the 7 were repeat offenders). The threat to extort money or cause bodily harm was engendered among 3 of the 20 fights. Cutting classes whereby a student left the building without permission of any supervising school personnel thereby endangering the safety and welfare of the entire school occurred seven times; 3 of the 7 were boys while 4 of the 7 were girls. Youth officers remanded 3 of the 7 students to school. Disruptive misconduct of a pupil that negatively affected the learning environment of others was observed more among boys than girls as 5 of the 23 were male suspenses and 2 of the 20 were female suspenses. Girls acted in defiance of school rules (refusing to serve detention) more often than boys as 2 out of 23 boys were suspended for such infractions in comparison to 7 out of 20 girls. In most cases the pupil was indifferent to the consequences, failed to control his/her anger or did not understand that alternative actions existed. Among the 3 grade levels, approximately 20 students were evaluated for special education at the recommendation of the respective deans.

Causative Analysis:

Powerful urges to be accepted, to be liked, and to be popular preoccupy the adolescent of both sexes. Boys tend to demonstrate the need of mastering their environment while girls strive to be well liked. Peer pressure often plays a decisive role in their lives. Most are afraid to articulate their thoughts and some confuse the ability to demonstrate anger and disrespect as a sign of self-assertiveness. As they mature they develop more intense"crushes", engage in more meaningful friendships, and are subject to more arguments and discord among friends and relatives. They encounter intense emotional feelings of hurt, separateness, and rejection. Negative experiences necessitate a mistrust (for their own personal coping) among adults, particularly those in authority. In an attempt to express their individuality and independence among members of the family (source of conflict) they become defiant, judgmental and even abusive.

Student misbehavior is not a simple reflection of student misconduct in school rather the result of a myriad of factors grounded in the ways schools operate. Students chances of suspension increase if teachers believe that students are incapable of problem-solving, condescend when communicating with them or are curt in attitude. They also increase when students believe that teachers are uninterested in them, the administrative rules lack fair governance or bias exists.

Dysfunctional family life, single-parented homes and the subject of a "flip-flop" generation whereby the child is first raised by a grandparent (parent either is too young, unwed or incapable of rearing her offspring) returns about the age of seven to a newly

formed domicile of the parent, only to be remanded to the grandparent (usually within five years) when domestic problems dominate. These problems are inclusive of drug addiction, criminal incarceration of a parent, financial and emotional instability.

Values are neither taught nor practiced. Little to no parental supervision exists in the home. "Latchkey" students of single-parent homes are often the last to leave and the first to return home. Seventy-five percent of the youngsters are unsupervised upon their return home from school. And, those parents who undertake multiple jobs inadvertently increase, through their extended absence, the emotional as well as the physical remoteness between themselves and their children. Apathetic to parental desires, the child arbitrarily adopts the values of those with whom he seeks approbation.

Communication between home and school is difficult at best. Parental phones are frequently disconnected or nonexistent. At least 50% of those who have phones fail to secure answering machines. Since 90% of the parents work, and emergency contact numbers of relatives and neighbors prove unreliable, communication by phone is frequently unsuccessful. Although subsequent mail communication is attempted, it is not uncommon to learn that notices are intercepted by the pupil or a sibling.

Parents regard school and educators negatively. Often embittered by personal educational experiences, or having failed to complete their individual education, the importance of education is minimized. If verbal acclaim toward education is sounded in the home, nonparticipation at school functions by the parent merely serves as a mixed message between parent and

child. These mixed messages extend to respect for authority personal accountability and compliance to school rules.

The Related Literature:

Smilansky, Moishe (1991, Summer lecturer at Washington D.C.), a leading authority on aberrant behavior among adolescents, from the University of Tel Aviv, clearly stated that students in need of remedial education must be removed and isolated from his/her environment and peers in order effectuate the greatest positive change of behavior.

Vincent and Bostdorff (1990) found that hardcore, emotionally handicapped, special educational children responded poorly to any attempt at behavioral-modification. Their needs are complex and require individual and psychological attention. These students, therefore, would not constitute the targeted population.

Diem, Richard A. (1988) evaluated the effectiveness of on-campus suspensions at a middle school in San Antonio,Texas, and found as its chief weakness that teachers used the program as a "dumping ground." Moreover, there was a strong correlation between repeat offenders and potential dropouts. The deans, therefore, will recommend those to be isolated in the "in-house" suspension. Group-guidance and individual-guidance are integral features of remedial education.

Martin, Marilyn and Tyre, Colin (1984), attest to the reduction of disciplinary suspensions among junior high school students who were at risk of suspension through the establishment of a counseling service, particularly group-counseling. Social-skill training, stress

management, coping strategies, and self understanding were featured.

Feindler, Marriot & Iwata (1984) conducted an anger control program for junior high school delinquents. Thirty-six "in room" suspended students constituted the targeted sample. Self-control strategies as well as strategies specific to aggressive/disruptive incidents were successfully introduced.

Schmidt, John J., & Biles, Johnny, W. (1985), investigated and positively effectuated role-playing and puppetry to help explore self-perception, improve communication skills, make friends, acquire compromising and negotiating skills, and develop a healthy relationship among peers.

III. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Project RISC: Remedy (through) isolation, structure, (and) counseling.

The following goals are proposed for the implementation of Project RISC during the 1992-1993 school semester:

1. To decrease the Principal suspensions among the students of J.H.S./Middle School 141 through the use of an "in- house" suspension; the location of which would be at the annex or Academy of the school.

2. To incorporate structure academically as well as characteristically through the employment of a single teacher who will serve as the suspense-teacher-in-charge (STC) of the

suspended during the morning classes and a single STC during the afternoon who will implement guidance techniques.

3. To enhance student's individual perception, self-esteem and self-worth through role-playing and group counseling techniques.

4. To develop positive skills of communication among the suspended and their peers as well as the suspended and school personnel.

5. To introduce negotiating skills as an alternative to violence as an integral component of remedy.

6. To increase the attendance as well as the punctuality of the student body.

7. To motivate continuity and completion of assigned homework.

8. To induce an increase in the reading scores of the target population.

IV. OBJECTIVE:

1. There will be a 25% decrease in Principal suspensions for the school year 1992-1993 in contrast to Principal suspensions of the baseline year 1991-1992 among the general educational students who presently constitute the seventh grade.

2. There will an 15% decrease of repeat suspense offenders for the school year 1992-1993 in contrast to the repeat offenders of the baseline year 1991-1992.

3. There will be a 15% increase in positive attitudes directed towards school as well as among peer groups of participating students. This will be measurable via pre and post student-questionnaires, pre and post teacher-surveys and guidance counselors' interviews that will be administered at the entrance of the program as well as at the termination of the school year, June, 1993.

4. There will be a 10% reduction of students who will be evaluated for special education through the recommendation of the deans for the school year 1992-1993 in contrast to those students who were evaluated for special education during the baseline year 1991-1992 as recommended by the respective deans.

V. SOLUTION STRATEGY:

1.1 No more than 15 students will be assigned to an "in house" detention at any one (6 day) cycle. These students will be assigned by the dean of their respective grade level. Students encompassing three different grade levels may consequently be contained in the same room, at the Academy. The room (1.1a) is large, contains no fixed furniture and can adopt to individual stations of isolation, or an infinite variety of classroom management techniques that may be employed in group and /or peer counseling. During the last school conference the staff will be apprised of the project. Those interested may apply, according to precedent, for the posted positions of suspense-teacher-in-charge (STC) .

1.2 The students will be notified one week in advance of the assignment. Parents will be notified through the dean by way of a

pre-suspension conference. In the event the child is irresponsive and deemed "out-of-control" by STC, the parent will be expected to come to school. A Principal's suspension may be implemented.

1.3 Since the school employs a 6-day-cycle, the detention must be effectuated for 1 cycle. In the event of an absence the selectee will serve the corresponding day in the next cycle, automatically.

2. The student has the obligation of acquiring and bringing to the Academy any/all academic materials such as books, writing materials and references for the assigned week.

2.1 The dean is responsible for notifying all subject teachers of the assigned detention with the anticipation that each subject teacher will provide the necessary academics for the pupil.

2.2 The subject teachers are responsible for providing, correcting and offering guidelines in writing pertinent to their respective subjects. No child should be scholastically penalized upon his/her return. Instead, a congruence of his academics is emphasized.

2.3 The STC must be provided with a telephone in order to communicate with either parent and/ or subject teacher. The morning STC serves as an official teacher by taking and recording the attendance and notifying a parent if the child fails to attend school. If a child is late he/she will be retained an equivalent amount of time at the end of the school day by the afternoon STC. Both STC's serve as the liaison between pupil, subject teachers, dean, and parent. The morning STC is responsible for collecting and distributing individual assignments, monitoring students' lunch (periods 1-4), and recording, via an anecdotal record, a brief

description of the child's behavior (see appendix A). The afternoon STC (periods 5-8) implements the guidance syllabus, similarly comments on the child's behavior via the anectodal record and dismisses the pupils.

3. At the end of the cycle both STC's will evaluate each student and recommend, (a) departmentalization (b) departmentalization with a progress sheet (see appendix B) or (c) retention for a second cycle of "in house." No child may be retained more than three consecutive cycles.

4. The child who is at risk of being suspended is the desired candidate for the RISC program. Repeated misconduct, continued refusal to abide by the rules and regulations of the school, refusal to serve detention, or a student who appears to be "out of control," thereby hindering the positive education of others may best profit from this program. Acts of criminal nature will necessitate immediate suspension according to the criteria stipulated by the Chancellor's Regulations of May 31,1991, sections A-441. Deans are encouraged to use the "in-house" and exhaust all alternatives before initiating suspensions of lesser magnitude.

5. According to the syllabus designed for RISC, counseling will entail roleplaying modeled after the format implemented by the Phoenix Drug Rehabilitation Program of New York as well as guest speakers that reflect positive role-models. The six days would embody lessons concerning, (a) self-perception (b) student attitudes (c) improving communication skills among peers and those in authority (d) the art of compromise and nonviolence (e) Problem-solving techniques, and (f) cultural value differences. Those assigned a second time would be given individual guidance.

VI. STAFFING:

Full Time:	Title	Responsibilities
Two	Additional on-line teachers (to replace staff members who will respond to the posted positions of two STC's).	1. Outstanding disciplinarians are sought, (one with a career/guidance background who will serve as a liason among subject teachers, parents, counselors and deans; maintain anecdotal, and evaluation records. 2. The morning STC is expected to procure the student assignments, take the attendance, and oversee the subject teacher's assignments. 3. The afternoon STC teacher will supervise 1 lunch, period 5. 4. The afternoon teacher is expected to implement the provided guidance syllabus (periods 6-8) and dismiss the students.
One	Para	1. To assist the STC

Qualifications of teachers

The Suspense Teacher-In-Charge (STC) must be an appropriately licensed New York City teacher with a minimum of five years experience in a middle/junior high school who has demonstrated an expertise in disciplinary/ behavioral modification techniques as well as a familiarity with the principles of career and/or guidance implementation

VII. PROJECT RISC EVALUATION PLAN:

Objectives	Data Collection	Time Line
1. There will be a 25% suspension reduction among the general education students who presently constitute the seventh grade.	Suspense records	June, 1993
2. There will a 15% decrease of repeat suspense offenders.	Suspense records	June, 1993
3. There will be a 15% increase in positive attitudes directed towards school as well as among peer groups of participating students.	*Pre and Post Tests *Student Questionnaire *Teacher Survey Guidance Counselor's Interviews "Academic" Referrals	June, 1993

Objectives	Data Collection	Time Line
4. There will be a 10% reduction of students who will be evaluated for special education through the recommendation of the deans for the school year 1992-1993.	SBST Records	June, 1993

VIII. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT:

Melvin Katz, the Principal of J.H.S./Middle School 141 will be responsible for assuring that all Project RISC objectives are attained and that all requirements and regulations setforth by the New York State Education Department are followed. Some responsibilities of the principal include:

(1) supervising the Project RISC Coordinator
(2) ensuring that all records and materials needed for Project RISC are purchased
(3) reviewing project documentation for accuracy and completeness
(4) attending meetings if required by the ancillary implementors such as the STC, deans, and guidance counselors.

The project coordinator will be Ireneanne Novell, the ninth grade dean who has a NYC license in Administration and Supervision as well as a NYC Social Studies license. She has been appointed to 141 since 1960 and was instrumental in initiating CAP (Community

Assistance Program) at the Academy. She had designed and taught a career program at the Academy for eight years and had served as an adjunct professor at Manhattan College. Some duties include at no cost to the Project:

(1) purchasing all project materials (such as a phone for the STC)
(2) preparing the syllabus for the group guidance and counseling feature of the project
(3) articulating with colleagues regarding program implementation
(4) securing the cooperation of parents of the students
(5) preparing all reports required by the district
(6) attending required meetings
(7) articulating with the principal regarding problems or needs of the participants.

APPENDIX B

THE CONTINGENCY CONTRACT

THE DAVID A. STEIN RIVERDALE J.H.S. 141

MELVIN KATZ, PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
Joseph Imperial
Ronald Lang
Sonia Rodriguez

DEANS
Ireneanne Novell
Richard Wendlinger
Byron Whitter

IRS-RISC Contract

(IN-Room Suspension)....(Rehabilitation through Isolation, Structure, and Curriculum)

Date _____199__

Student's Name_____

Class_____ Presuspension Date_____

Parent's Name_____

Phone (Home)_____Business_____

Address_____

_____Zip_____

As a result of the presuspension conference, the school offers to put aside the right of suspension of the student listed above, in return for the successful completion of the IRS-RISC program on the part of the assignee. It has been agreed by both

student as well as parent(s) that the student will enter the IRS-RISC program, on Monday, _____, for a minimum of 10 school days, or until 750 Points is reached and the recommendations of the teachers-in-charge (as illustrated on the following page) is obtained by the student. Under no condition will the pupil remain in the program for more than three weeks, or 15 school days. If the youngster fails to comply with the rules and regulations setforth, the parent agrees, upon notice by the school, to escort the assignee home whereby the suspension will become effective immediately.

The learner has the right to an uninterrupted education whereby the subject teachers will prepare and grade all necessary lessons. The student will be allowed a _____lunch (no._____) and lavatory privileges at scheduled periods during the school day.

The parent has the right to observe the program at any time and/or receive a daily progress sheet, in order to monitor the progress of the child.

The school reserves the right to search the child via a security guard for any unlawful weapons or substantive abuse materials.

The rules and regulations governing attendance, scholastics, and conduct of David A. Stein Middle School will continue to be in effect; all students are expected to adhere to them.

Student's signature: _____Date _____

Parent's signature: _____Date _____

Dean's signature: _____Date _____

APPENDIX C

EXPLANATION OF THE POINT SYSTEM

The Point System and Its Distribution

The Key:

Condition	Point
Unsatisfactory =	0 (similar to a warning). If three are accumulated during the course of any given day, the parent will be notified and the child will be suspended immediately.
Poor	2
Acceptable	3
Excellent	5

750 points needed

These points will be distributed for each major subject period as well as during the rehabilitative periods. The points will reflect both conduct and academic attitudes and will be distributed by the teachers-in charge. The exception will be lunch whereby only conduct will be appraised. The perfect score multiplied by 10, the minimum number of days required in the program, will total 750 points. If a child exhibits merely acceptable behavior for the 2 week period, he would have accumulated only 450 points and would not be eligible to terminate his IRS-RISC stay.

Periods of the Day:	Points: Conduct	Academic	Total
1. Major subject	5	5	10
2. Major subject	5	5	10
3. Major Subject	5	5	10
4. Major subject	5	5	10
5. Lunch	5	x	5
6. Rehabilitative sequence	5	5	10
7. Rehabilitative sequence	5	5	10
8. Rehabilitative sequence	5	5	10
			Total =75

APPENDIX D

ANECDOTAL OR POINT SYSTEM FORM

THE DAVID A. STEIN RIVERDALE J.H.S. 141
MELVIN KATZ, PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
Joseph Imperial
Ronald Lang
Sonia Rodriguez

DEANS
Ireneanne Novell
Richard Wendlinger
Byron Whitter

ANECDOTAL RECORD

_____ _____
CHILD CLASS

Date Time Behavioral Observations Points

Acad._____

Conduct____

1.....

Acad._____

Conduct____

2.....

Acad._____

Conduct____

3.....

Date-Time Behavioral Observations Points

Acad._____

Conduct____

4.....

LUNCH Conduct____

5.....

Acad._____

Conduct____

6.....

Acad._____

Conduct____

7.....

Acad._____

Conduct____

8.....

Comments: Total

...Free time _____(yes) _____(no)

APPENDIX E

EVALUATION SUMMARY OF THE ASSIGNEE

THE DAVID A. STEIN RIVERDALE J.H.S. 141
MELVIN KATZ, PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
Joseph Imperial
Ronald Lang
Sonia Rodriguez

DEANS
Ireneanne Novell
Richard Wendlinger
Byron Whitter

Evaluation Summary:

DATE_____19_____

NAME:(LAST)_____(FIRST)_____

CLASS_____

RECOMMENDATION:

_____Return to class
_____Return to class with a Progress Sheet
_____Individual Guidance
_____Tutoring for subjects
_____
_____
_____
_____Educational Evaluation

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE, KEY, AND RESULTS TO THE PRETEST-POSTTEST SAMPLE OF ATTITUDES

QUESTIONNAIRE

This student questionnaire is being conducted to help teachers design an effective IRS-RISC program. You will be given this survey twice. Below are questions separated by 4 categories. Please answer all questions

CATEGORY A:
Please place only one ✓ in the space of your choice.

1. How do you see yourself?
   - ___a. above average in intelligence with leadership qualities
   - ___b. could be smart if I studied
   - ___c. average in intelligence
   - ___d. below average
   - ___e. could learn if the teacher likes me

2. How well do your parents like you?
   - ___a. extremely well loved
   - ___b. partial to you in comparison to your brothers & sisters
   - ___c. treats you strictly but fairly
   - ___d. too strict, unreasonable, and won't allow you to grow up
   - ___e. abusive

3. How well do your peers like you?
   - ___a. extremely well
   - ___b. very well
   - ___c. moderately well
   - ___d. indifferent to you
   - ___e. mean and sometimes nasty to you

4. How well do you get along with members of the opposite sex ?
   - ___a. extremely well
   - ___b. very well
   - ___c. average for my age group
   - ___d. not as well as my friends
   - ___e. not at all

5. How well do your teachers like you?
   ___a. extremely well
   ___b. they usually favor me above the others in class
   ___c. average or like most of my friends
   ___d. they pick on me for no good reason
   ___e. they hate me because _____

Category B:

1. How many hours a day do you spend doing your homework?
   ___a. never do homework
   ___b. 1/2 hour or less
   ___c. more than 1/2 hour but never more than 1 hour
   ___d. 1 hours to 2 hours
   ___e. more than 2 hours

2. When I do not do homework assignments it may be because:
   ___a. I misunderstood what it was I was being asked to do. When I got home I found I could not do it.
   ___b. I had no time to do that particular subject
   ___c. the work is boring
   ___d. I knew I would get it wrong
   ___e. I know I can get a better grade by copying my homework assignment from someone else

3. When I am <u>not</u> prepared for an exam I usually:
   ___a. get my parent/guardian to write a note to excuse me.
   ___b. ask my parent if I could stay home from school.
   ___c. pretend I don't feel well
   ___d. act out in class so the teacher can ask me to leave
   ___e. take my chances and take the exam

4. When I am in school my mind wanders and I can't concentrate.
   ___a. always
   ___b. frequently
   ___c. occasionally
   ___d. rarely
   ___e. never

5. When I can't concentrate in school it is usually because:

___a. there was fighting at home
___b. somebody threatened me at school
___c. I don't feel well
___d. I'm thinking about my boyfriend/girlfriend
___e. the class is boring

Category C:

1. How would you rate your behavior now in comparison to last term?

___a. extremely improved
___b. very improved
___c. improved a little
___d. about the same
___e. worse

2. Your misconduct is mostly do to:

___a. a willful lose of temper. I could control it if I wanted to, but sometimes you have let your friend know your not going to pushed around.
___b. trying to be funny in class
___c. my reaction when people yell at me
___d. cutting class
___e. being bored in school with nothing good to do

3. Which statement describes you the best?

___a. My friends regard me as the best player in the sport of ___
___b. my friends are number one in my life. I'm happiest when I am with them
___c. I'm happiest when watching television
___d. I worry about what others think of me. Sometimes I go along with the crowd even if I really do not want to.
___e. I am not pleased with my _____(appearance)

4. Do you feel intimidated or threatened by your peers?

___a. never
___b. rarely
___c. sometimes
___d. frequently
___e. alwaysr

5. If you knew your actions would lead to a suspension would you have still done it?

___a. always
___b. frequently
___c. sometimes
___d. rarely
___e. never

Category D:

1. Students who are suspended usually feel as though they have to prove something. Do you? Explain how you feel about this.

---

2. Student's are suspended as a punishment for unacceptable behavior Why do you think suspensions work or don't work?

---

3. How did your parents act when you were suspensded? How didthey help you with the problem that caused the suspension?

---

4. Why did you and your parent agree to be assigned to IRS-RISC?

---

5. Explain why school is not working for you.

Comments:

To be answered only after completing the IRS-RISC program. To be answered when taking the Questionnaire for the second time.

**Explain if IRS-RISC has or has not helped you.

KEY TO THE STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was designed by the writer in order to probe the participant's personal attitudes of self and school as well as his/her interaction among peers and adults. Category A measured how the learner envisions himself, category B evaluated his/her alterable actions in school, and category C uncovered how the student perceives he/she interacts with peers and adults. The answers to questions found in categories A and C were similarly weighted in point value Category B differed as illustrated below. Category D, an open ended segment of the questionnaire, was not weighted; the responses were merely duplicated and used as a source of information.

The questions were weighted an assigned point values. The maximum score for each category was 50 points; the minimum was 0. On a sliding scale from 0-50 one may determine the degree of positive self-perception or attitude, more popularly referred to as self-esteem, based on the points scored. Students receiving:

(a) 40-50 points demonstrated the highest positive attitude,
(b) 35-25 demonstrated average self-esteem,
(c) 25 points or less reflected low self-esteem; indifference or an inability to appropriately communicate with others was evident.

Categories A and C:

Questions 1-5:

Selection	Point Value
a + b	= 10
c	= 5
d + e	= 0

Category B:

Question. 1
Selection: Point Value

a	=	0
b + c	=	5
d + e	=	10

Question. 2
Selection:

a	=	10
b	=	5
c + d + e	=	0

Question. 3
Selection:

a + b + c	=	5
d	=	0
e	=	10

Question. 4
Selection:

a + b	=	0
c	=	5
d + e	=	10

Question. 5
Selection:

a + c	=	10
b + e	=	0
d	=	5

Figures 4 and 5, which contrasts the results of the pretest and posttest findings, depict the greatest improvement among those entering IRS-RISC with low esteem to attitudes of average attitudes. Sixty percent or better thought of themselves with the highest perception; this perception virtually remained the same at the posttest as well. There was no correlation between the child's actual scholastic ability and his perception of his/her academic abilities or achievement. By the same token, category B illustrated low or poor attitudes toward school with a corresponding improvement from the poor to average attitude towards school. during the posttest results.

Figure 4

Results of the Student Pretest Questionnaire

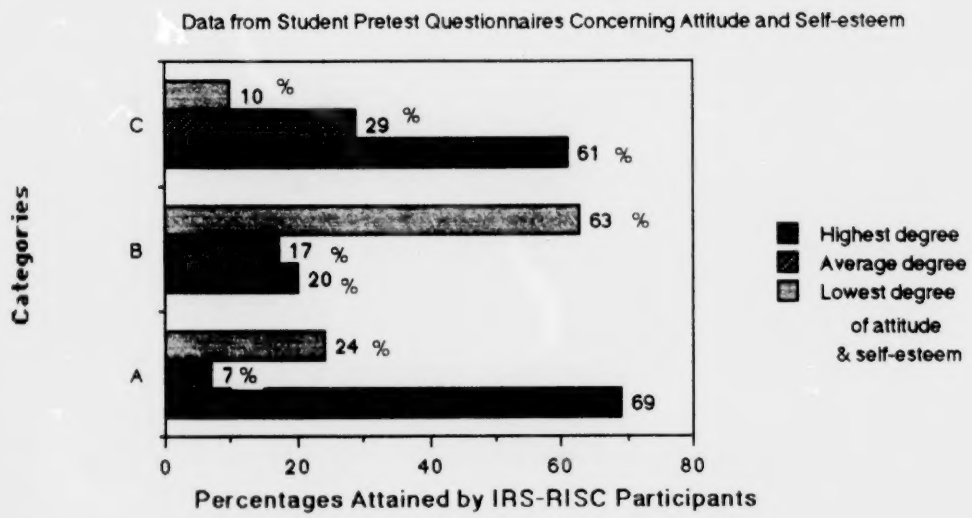
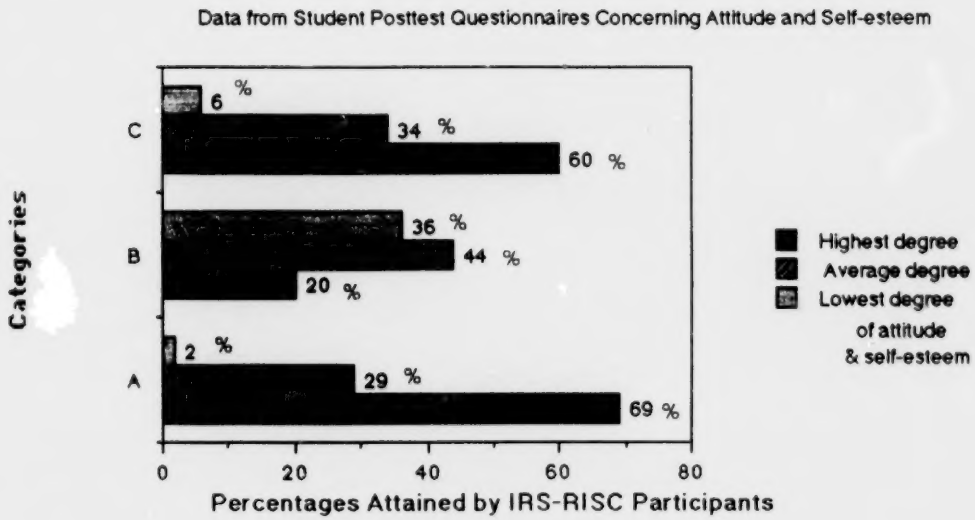


Figure 5.

Results of the Student Posttest Questionnaire



Category D:

Results

The 41 students who completed the IRS-RISC program attempted to answer 5 questions of category D during the pretest and the culminating question during the posttest. Every student did not volunteer an answer. Their answers were used primarily as a source of information for future study. If starred, the same answer was articulated more than once. Each answer that was submitted has been enumerated below:

Question 1: Students who are suspended usually feel as though they have to prove something. Do you? How do you feel about this?

Answers to question 1.

1. My choice is to get suspended. I can't say I had to prove something. I might duet [sic] again.
2. No. I don't have to prove anything. I do it strictly from my mind and I do whatever I think is right.
3. I never let my friends tell me what to do. If I have to lose my friend I guess its [sic] for the best.
4. No. I just couldn't control it.
5. No one was present and I thought I could get away with it. Its {sic] not proven [sic] something.
6. No, I only get suspended if I get cought [sic] doing something.
7. * No, I don't feel this way. I have nothing to prove. If somebody like me its [sic] not because I get suspended.
8. I don't feel scared when I get suspended. I just get into trouble.
9. No, because what's to prove?[sic[You got suspenders [sic] and it's good.
10. I do not feel good when I am suspended.
11. I don't start out getting suspended.
12. The way I feel is very worried.

13. * I don't care what my friends think. I don't try to impress them.
14. I don't impress my friends the way I try to impress people. I impress my parents by doing my work. I try to impress my teachers by making them happy.
15. I feel mad because I know I did something wrong and [sic] my dad and mom feel mad.
16. * No.
17. * I do not!
18. I feel Fair [sic] to the kids that I Fath [sic] with in my class.
19. sirbe para corejir [sic].
20. I feel bad because I misused school and my parent don't like dot [sic].
21*. I don't agree.
22. Well I wouldn't be fighting unless I knew I was right.
23. I'm not going to let people push me around. If it means getting suspended then I'll have to be suspended.
24. Sometimes I just get sic [sic] and tired of school and I want to stay home but my mother wont [sic] let me.
25. What are you supposed to do if someone hits you-[sic] just stand there and take it?
26. Nobody pushes me around. I dont have to prove anything.
27. You dont [sic] no [sic] what I feel. I cant [sic] explain it too good [sic].
28. Mrs. Novell [sic] if a guy dis s [sic] me hes [sic] gonna [sic] get it.
27. Tell them not to get in my face and I won't get suspended.
28. Sometimes the teachers rag on you. They deserve what they get. It's not a question of proving anything.
29. If you don't stand up for what you believe in you get pushed around like the other herbs in the school.
30. I stand up for my rights-nothing more-nothing less.
32. Its [sic] not a question of proven [sic] something. I just act stupid.
33. Sometimes I start it and I deserve it. Sometimes it's the another person's fault and I get blamed.
34. School is so boring that I gotta [sic] do things to have fun.
35. I don't know why I get into fights. I just do it and get punished.

36. Thers [sic] always a smart ass in every class. Someone has to straiten [sic] him out.

Question 2: Student's are suspended as a punishment for unacceptable behavior. Why do you think suspensions work or don't work?

Answers to question 2.

1.* I think suspensions work.
2. Don't work because I do it again.
3. It doesn't work because stundents [sic] misses [sic] school.
4. The suspended [sic] work becoues [sic] the kids would not do it agin [sic].
5. I don't think it works because the person will do it again. He just enjoys not coming to school.
6. I think it helps me because I know not to do it again.
7. I think suspension should work this way. If a kid does something real bad he should get suspended for two weeks.
8.* Suspensions don't work because as soon as they come back from suspension they behave bad again.
9. Yes I think suspensions really work.
10. They work if you are fair about it.
11. Suspension don't always work because the kids [sic] side isn't always heard. Sometimes we are right too.
12. What makes me mad is that you fell for the kid's father crying about me punching her in the nose. You didn't understand why I had to do it. In that case suspensions don't work.
13. I think it doesn't work because the kid probably would not stop.
14.* I think suspensions work when the parents are strict.
15. They may work if the person has a real problem.
16.* They work because you get 5 [sic] days to think about what you did.
17. It works for me because my mother punishes me more when I stay home.
18. I love it. I sleep late and watch TV.
19. puede ayudar alos demas [sic]

20. It works because it is boring home.
21. It works because you have too much to catch up when you get back to school. School feels funny. Your friends look at you funny and ask a lotta [sic] questions.
22. No, it doesn't work. All my friends have been suspended one time or another.
23. Teachers make too big a deal about suspensions. Its not in your record when you graduate.
24. Who cares. Its [sic] a vacation.
25. Depends what kind of suspension it is. No I don't think it works because even after a serious incident the person returns to school. People forget quickly.
26. No. Many people do not get suspended who should be suspended such as the special ed kids.
27. It depends on the dean. Some are fair and it works. Others just suspend you to use clowt [sic].
28. It works because they would eventually catch on and wonder if being bad is worth friends or whatever reason they are doing it for.
29. If it is for one or two days it doesn't work. Everyone thinks you are out sick. When you are out a hole [sic] week I think it works better.
30. It works because of your mother. It's not being bad that makes you feel bad it's seeing her so disappointed in you that really hurts.
31. It doesn't work because your parent can't stay home and you do whatever you want.
32. When you use up your 10 days they can't do nothing [sic]. The principal speaks to your parent and then they bargain with you. So how can it work.
33. I feel worse when I serve detention, so I guess it doesn't work.
34. Depends how scared the kid is. Me I don't scare easily.
35. Yes because my mother screams so much I can't stand listening to her.
36. If the same problem comes up the chances are the kid is going to do the same thing. So, how can suspension work?
37. After you are suspended you have to use a progress sheet. That works because your mother knows how you are behaven [sic].

Question 3: How did your parents act when you were suspended? How did they help you with the problem that caused suspension?

Answers to Question 3.

1. They told me to behave and not to duet [sic] again or they would punish me.
2. Suspending is not a big thing in my house. If you get suspended then you just get suspended.
3. They said that I better not do it again.
4. They told me to be good, and to go to the dean if anyone starts anything with me.
5. * They were very mad.
6. * They were angry with me.
7. * They were disappointed in me.
8. They were calm but they talked to me alot [sic] about school.
9. They asked me what happened and try [sic] to find in what place my parents and me [sic] go [sic] wrong.
10. Very angry, and they took me to a counselor.
11. They just said, "You're grounded."
12. My parents were very angry to say the least. Punishing me.
13. They were unhappy with me. They talk [sic] with me - and that's that.
15. They were not mad at me because you or they could not see the girl to prove I punched her.
16. * My parents gotvery mad with me when I got suspended. They talked with me.
17. My mother was mad. When she calmed down she started to talk to me to find out why I got suspended.
18. My parents didn't agree with the school's rule. They felt if I was defending myself I should not have been suspended. The whole thing is silly. Is a guy supposed to just stand there and take it?
19. Medijera que porque lo y se eso [sic].
20. * My parents do not hit me. They talk to me.
21. My mother punished me for three and a half weeks.
22. My mother screamed her head off. She threatened to punish me but gave in after a couple of days.

23. They reacted well. They did not help me with the problem.
24. They do nothing to me. They said if I do it again I would get punished
25. They feel bad because I behave bad in school.
26. They didn't care. They said it was all part of growing up.
27. My mother said I was just expressing myself. Next time do it away from the school so that the dean can't get involved.
28. My mother wasn't happy about the suspension but she was grateful for the opportunity for the teachers to give me more attention and perhaps find out what makes me tic [sic].
29. My parents said they really had no choice because they didn't want a suspension on my school record.
30. My mother cried. She told me I couldn't play with my nintendo until after I got back to class.
31. My mother said I was just like my father and the both of us were killin [sic] her. She said if I keep it up she was going to seek help for me.

Question 4:

Why did you and your parent agree to be assigned to IRS-RISC?

Answers to question 4.

1.* We had no choice.
2. Because they wanted me to behave better in school.
3. It is good to stay in their [sic] and do your work in the IRS room.
4. To see if I could get better at my work.
5. They thought it would be helpful. I was in school doing work.
6. My mother said I need disaplent [sic].
7. Because I could better and pass the six grade.
8. Because they think I do better when I am along [sic].
9. I d rather stay there than stay home.
10. So that this is better than home because here you can't go to sleep. At home you watch television, sleep and not do

work.

11. Because if I got suspended again it would be close to my third suspention [sic].
12. * I didn't. My mother agreed for both of us.
13. * We didn't want it on my record.
14. * Because we both thought it could help.
15. Get through better and pass my subjects.
16. To see how I behavior [sic] myself.
17. I did not want it to get it on my perment [sic] record.
18. Cause I am not a child and this would help my behavior.
19. Mi Padre dise que no peleaen la escuela pelea afuera [sic]..
20. My mother agreed to put me in IRS-RISC.
21. I thought it would help me in the long run.
22. It was almost the end of the term and I knew I wasn't doin [sic] so good. I thought if I went into the program the teachers could help me pass my subjects and I could graduate.
23. I had nothing to lose.
24. I wanted to see what it was all about. If I didn't like it I could always take the suspension.
25. It was a great way to keep away from the guys who always get me into trouble.
26. I needed some to think. I can't do that home. My mother didn't really care. Whatever I chose she would go along with.
27. My mother was going to the D.R. [Dominican Republic] for a couple of weeks and there was nobody home to watch me.
28. I really wanted to do better.
29. I felt lost and I thought the program could help.
30. I thought it would make my mother happy if I tried it. She said she was at her wits [sic] end.

Question 5: Explain why school is not working for you.

Answers to question 5.

1. Sometimes I don't like school so I cut school-but that's why

2. It's not the school that isn't working but the kids and the pressure they make me face. Sometimes they tease me, call me names. I just don't feel as though I have friends. I hate coming to school and land up taking it out on the teachers.
3. It is working but it's the teachers.
4. Its [sic] working. Its [sic] really up to me.
5. School is working. It's just that I can't control my temper.
6. I'd rather be in school than home so I guess it is working.
7. School is O.K. The kids aren't.
8. Sometimes I feel as though I don't belong. My mother spends all her money to dress me like other kids- but whair [sic] different. I can't explane [sic] it.
9. * The only time I get into trouble is when I fight.
10. I am fine and school is working for me because I have people on my side.
11. School is working for me. Everything is fine.
12. It is. Why do you say it don't [sic]?
13. * Yes. School works for me.
14. School is not working for me because I failed my classes.
15. School is working for me but I just got to improve a little more.
16. * It works for me. It is just that I don't get along with a lot of the people.
17. I am hanging around the wrong people and they are giving me too many problems.
18. Yes it is good to me because it helps to get mor [sic] smerta [sic].
19. I would rather play in the park-so its [sic] not workin [sic].
20. mas llim [sic].
21. Its hard. I whand [sic] to do better and behea [sic].
22. The teachers give me too much homework. I don't have time for all that.
23. School is supposed to be a happy place. I always feel like I have to prove something. That's not happyness [sic]. They should teach you but not give you homework.
24. I wish the day to learn was longer but the number of days were shorter. The we could have fun days. Days to chose whatever we wanted to learn-just by signing up for classes. Then it

would work for me.

25. The food sucks. The teachers are in your face. And the kids are a bunch of herbs. School is not for me.
26. I could learn the same thing in half the time if they would let me. School is a waste of time. It doesn't work.
27. It works as a great place to hang out and meet people.
28. Most of the teachers aren't fair so how can it work?
29. If the kids didn't beat up on you it would work just fine.
30. School works for me. It works. It works.
31. It use to work. Now I don't understand the work.
32. I think we need time out to do what we want. Then when we have to study we can do it better.
33. School is a fun place when we work on projects and do things we never did before. For example we had the medieval fair. Its boring when we have to do the same things over and over. The I get into trouble and it doesn't work for me.
34. It's not the school. When the kids start up with me I get into trouble fighting.
35. It doesn't work when the teachers pick on one person when everyone else is doing the same thing. When they pick on me I let them have it and then I get sent to the dean.
36. I'm no punk. When the school don't [sic] help me it don't [sic] work.
37. This guy steals my wallet. I teach him a lesson and I get suspended. No way is school working for me.

Question ** (To be answered after completing the IRS RISC program). Explain if IRS-RISC has or has not helped you?

Answers to Question **

1.* It helped me to behave better in school.
2. Ami me punciona la escuela por que estorvien [sic].
3. It helped me in my studies.
4 No, it didn't help me. I couldn't go to my classes, talk to my friends, fool around with them or play in the park.
5. Yes. When I got home I had time to watch TV, listen to my music and dance. All the work was done in school.

6.* It helped me because I stayed away from the wrong people
7.* Ms.__listened to me. She was like a friend and that helped me
8.* I liked it when we all got together talking about our problems I found out that many of the guys felt the same way I did and that they weren't very different. They were just as scared, sometimes.
9. I left feeling good. I wasn't scared to go back to class because I did all my work. I enjoyed showing off what I knew.
10. I thought the in-room really helped. What pissed me off was that the teachers didn't believe I did the work myself.
11. This is my second time down here. I hope it is my last.
12. No coment [sic].
13. Youd [sic] get mad at me if I told you what I really think about this program.
14. It was good because I got lots [sic] of my own h.w. [homework] done quick [sic].
15. Yes, it did because you get work on top of work and you don't have time to get into more trouble.
16. I hated the program. It should not be used as a form of punishment. It is frustrating and feels like a jail.
17. This is unfair punishment. You are locked in a room. You can't talk, see or move around with anybody. This is really cruel.
18. I hated not being with my friends. By the time I got back to class some of the girls acted like they didn't remember me. I would never go back again. I would never recommend it to anyone either. Its too long.
19. You can't do nothing. She makes you do it over and over if there is one glitch on your paper. I hated sitting in one place. you know sometimes you just gotta [sic] get up and move around. I couldn't even go to the John for a smoke. I mean jails are even better. This was a hole. I should have taken the suspension.
20. The rap sessions were good. I'd like to try a few things they said. I think I could behave better. At least I'll try. I really don't want to come back again no matter how much Ms.__ tried to help me.
21. How can it help you just sitting there. [sic]
22. It helped me in my subjects, especially math. It also tried to show me how to avoid fights when the guys rag on you.

23. I like it because it was nice and quiet. I got my work done and nobody bothered me.
24. IRS-RISC helped me. When I didn't know my work the teacher didn't say see me after school [sic] -she showed me how to do it right away.
25. * Yes, I kept away from my friends and trouble.
26. * It helped me a little bit.
26. It has helped me when to stop fooling around and get to work.
27. puede agadalo a que no sega haciendo [sic].
28. No. It made me mad. The only thing missing was the handcuffs. We couldn't even eat lunch with our friends. I hated being stuck with a bunch of sixth grade babys [sic].
29. It helped me a little but I would rather it was only 2 [sic] days.
30. I know I'm starting to think about things a little different [sic] but I don't know if I still would think the same way when I see my friends.
31. I know what Mr.__ meant but its hard not fighting. Everyone will think I'm a herb. If the guys think I'm one they'll always pick on me and I'm dead meat. Sometimes its better to take your chances and get suspended. At least when you get suspended your [sic] one of the guys.
32. I don't think it makes much of a difference. Its just another form of torture.
33. The only difference is you get one teacher telling you what to do instead of 9 or 10.
34. I think the teachers really tried to help me. I felt good about my subjects. They made me think I could really do it. I'd like to show them and my mother. I really am going to try.
35. If I had my way I would never have chosen this dungin [sic]. Suspension is less painful. I don't like being away from my friends.

APPENDIX G

TEACHERS' SURVEY AND RESULTS ANALYZING ATTITUDES OF THE IRS-RISC PARTICIPANTS

TEACHERS' SURVEY ANALYZING IRS-RISC

The following survey is being distributed to the subject teachers of those students who were assigned to the IRS-RISC program in lieu of a principal's suspension. With your cooperation and feedback we may be able to determine its effectiveness and/or needed modifications.

Student's Name_____Class_____

Dates of IRS-RISC From _____to_____

Kindly check (✓) only one answer

1. Have you observed an academic improvement in the above student's classwork upon returning to class?
   - ___a. most of the time
   - ___b. more often than not
   - ___c. stayed about the same
   - ___d. no improvement was noted
   - ___e. has gotten worse

2. Has the student kept abreast scholastically with the other students of the class since the IRS-RISC assignment?
   - ___a. exceeded the class
   - ___b greatly improved
   - ___c. is on par with the class
   - ___d. is in need of a little remediation
   - ___e. has fallen far behind the class academically

3. Most of the conduct problems initiate in the classroom whereby the student is disruptive and impedes learning. If this is applicable, how do you evaluate the above student?
(__Check if not applicable)

___a. has made an extreme improvement
___b. has made a marked improvement
___c. has made a somewhat affective improvement
___d. has made no affective improvement
___e. has deteriorated since returning from the IRS-RISC program

4. How would you now evaluate the attitude of the above student in terms of respectfulness towards you?

___a. has made noticeable improvement
___b. appears to be making an effort to improve
___c. no change is noted
___d. has become more disrespectful
___e. other (please specify)

_____
_____
_____

5. Since the IRS, have you had more cooperation and feedback with the child's parent?

___a. most improved communication
___b. better communication
___c. somewhat improved communication
___d. no observable change either in communication nor cooperation
___e. more resistant, hostile, and incommunicative since the child's return to class

6. Do you believe the duration of the IRS-RISC was appropriate?
   ___a. most appropriate in order to initiate a change
   ___b. would have been more appropriate if it had been longer in duration
   ___c. would have bee more appropriate if it had been shorter in duration
   ___d. have no opinion
   ___e. other (please specify)

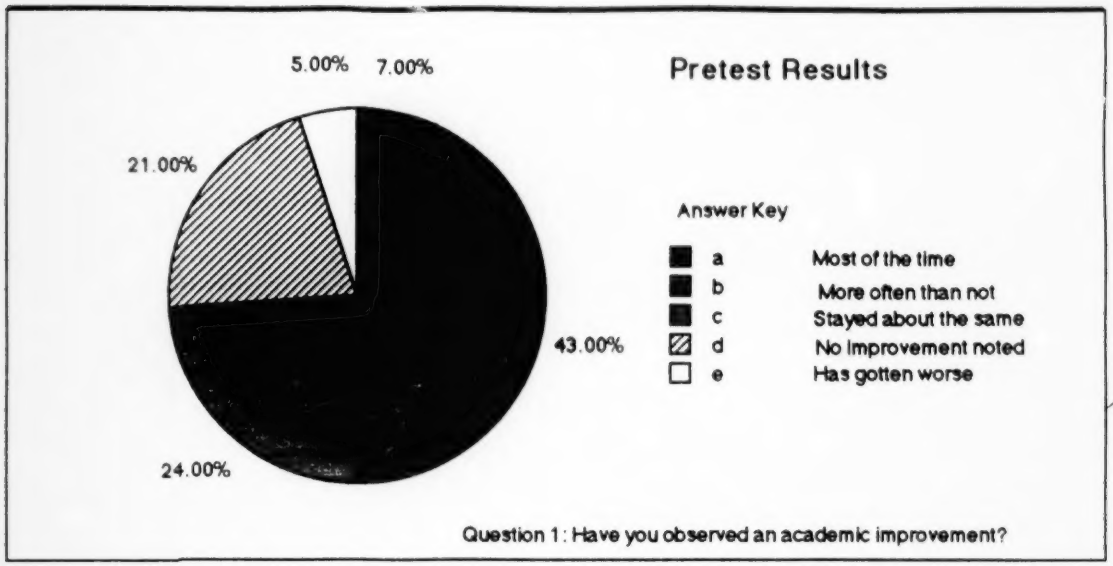
---

7. Please comment on the program's shortcomings or strengths as you perceive them to be:

Results

Two hundred and five surveys were disseminated among the 5 major subject teachers of the 41 participants who completed the program. The surveys submitted by the instructors of those candidates who were either suspended and/or transferred from the school were deleted from the results. Figures 6-10 reflect the tallied mean responses of each question of the preIRS-RISC and postIRS-RISC periods of implementation.

Teachers' Pretest-Posttest Survey Results Analyzing Attitudes of the IRS-RISC Participants (n=205)



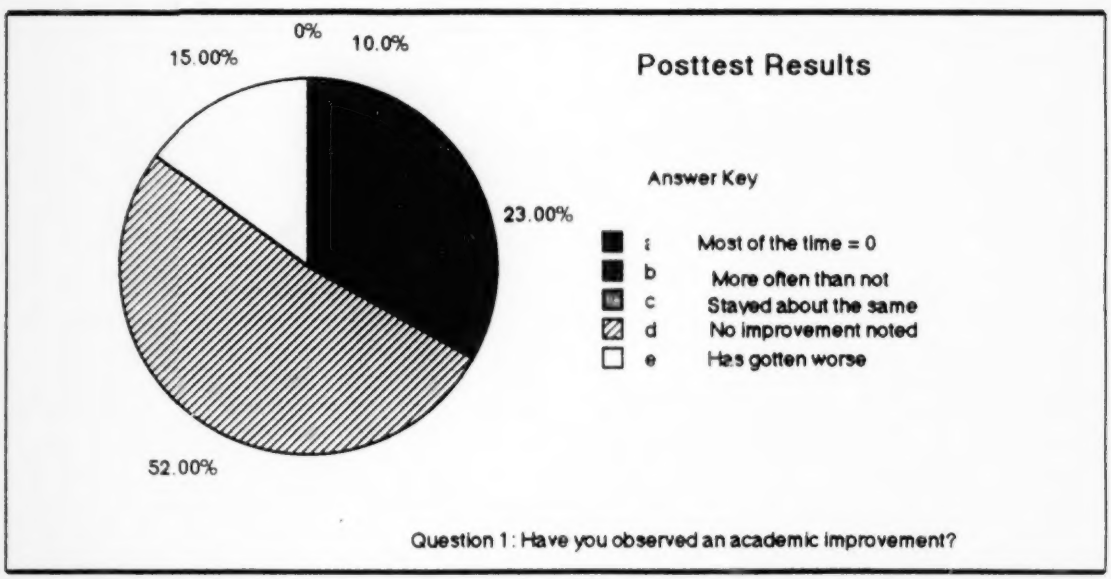
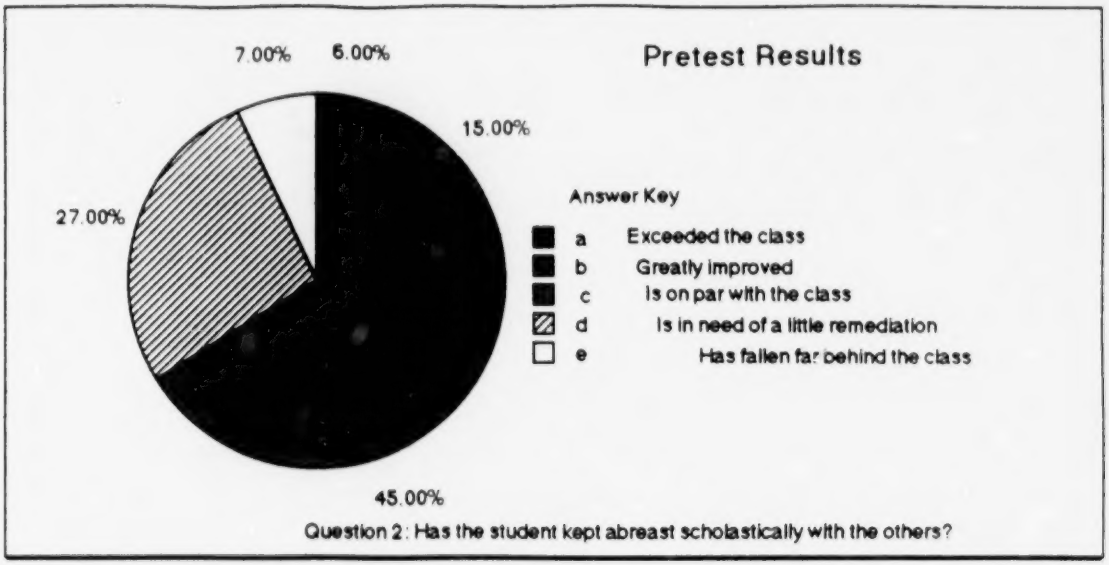


Figure 6. Results to Question 1 of the Teachers' Survey



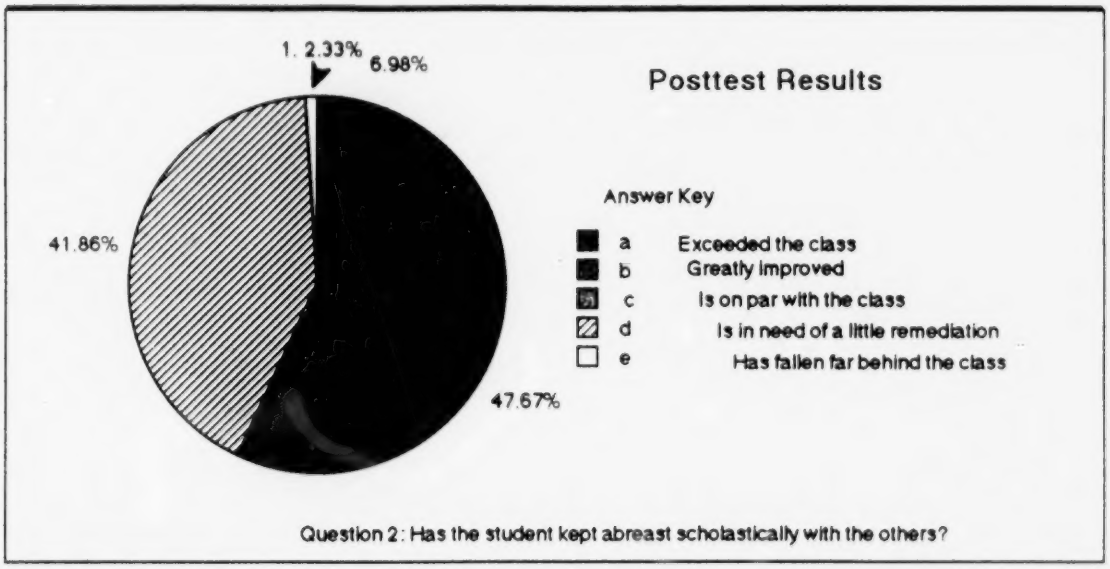
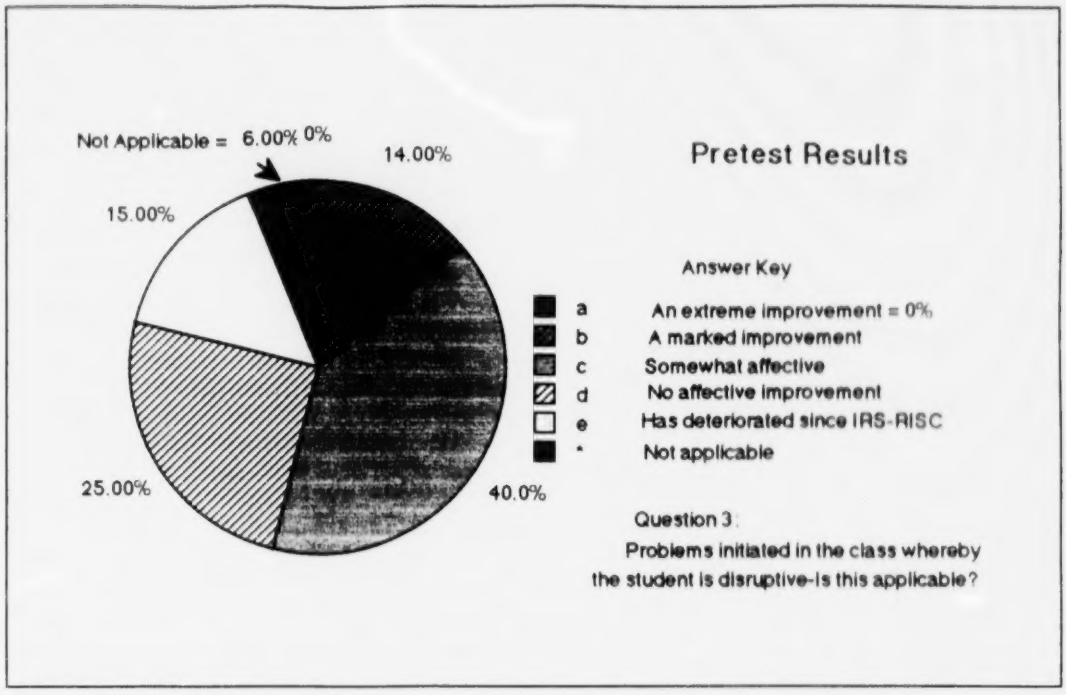

Posttest Results
1. 2.33%
6.98%
41.86%
47.67%
Answer Key
a Exceeded the class
b Greatly improved
c Is on par with the class
d Is in need of a little remediation
e Has fallen far behind the class
Question 2: Has the student kept abreast scholastically with the others?

Figure 7. Results to Question 2 of the Teachers' Survey



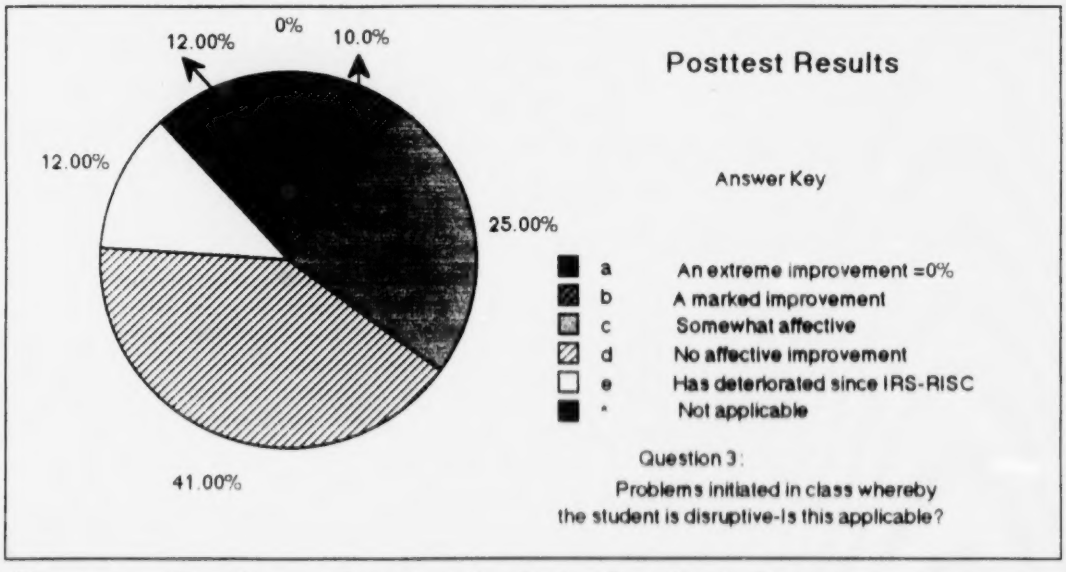
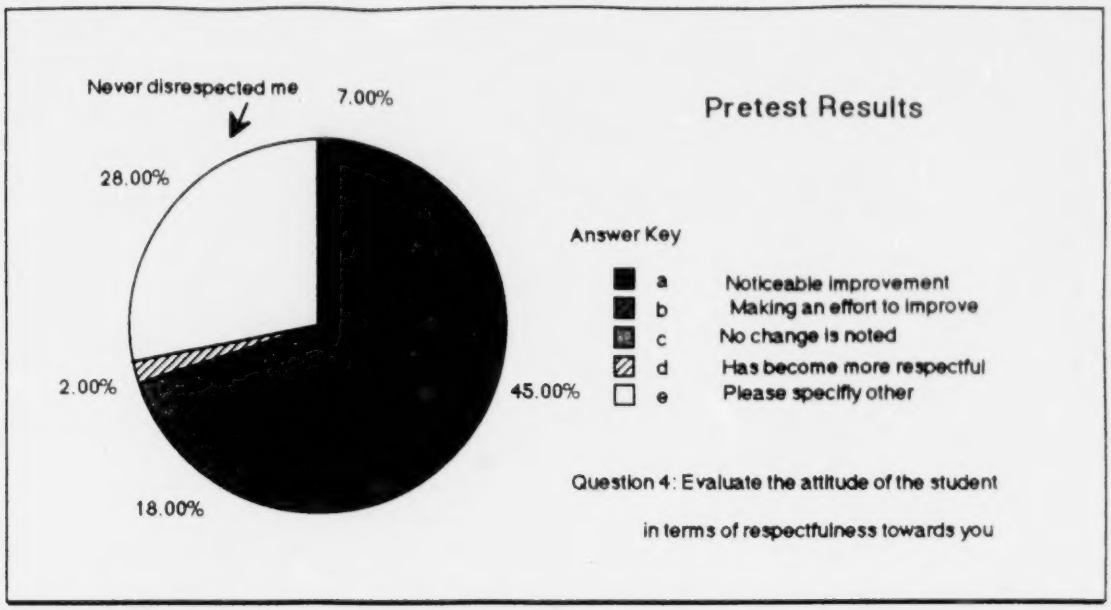


Figure 8. Results to Question 3 of the Teachers' Survey.



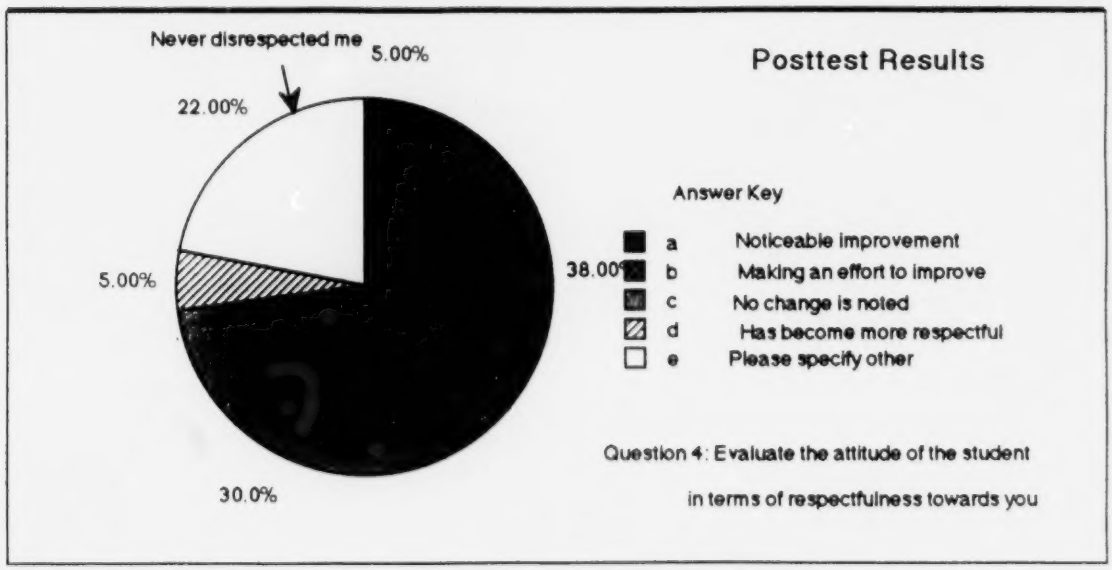
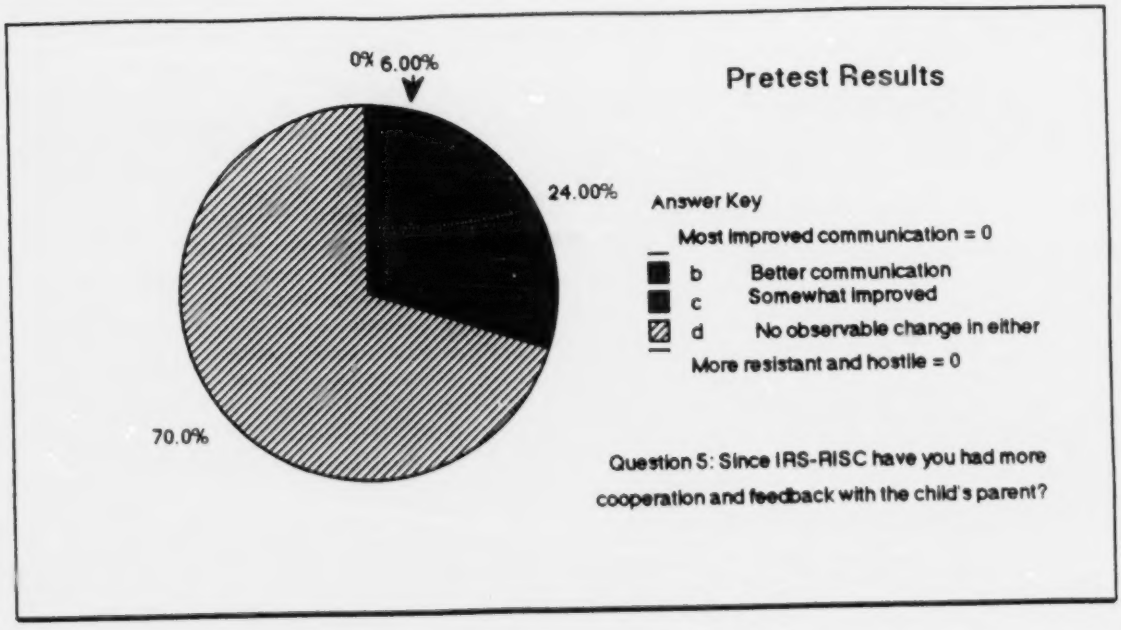


Figure 9. Results to Question 4 of the Teachers' Survey



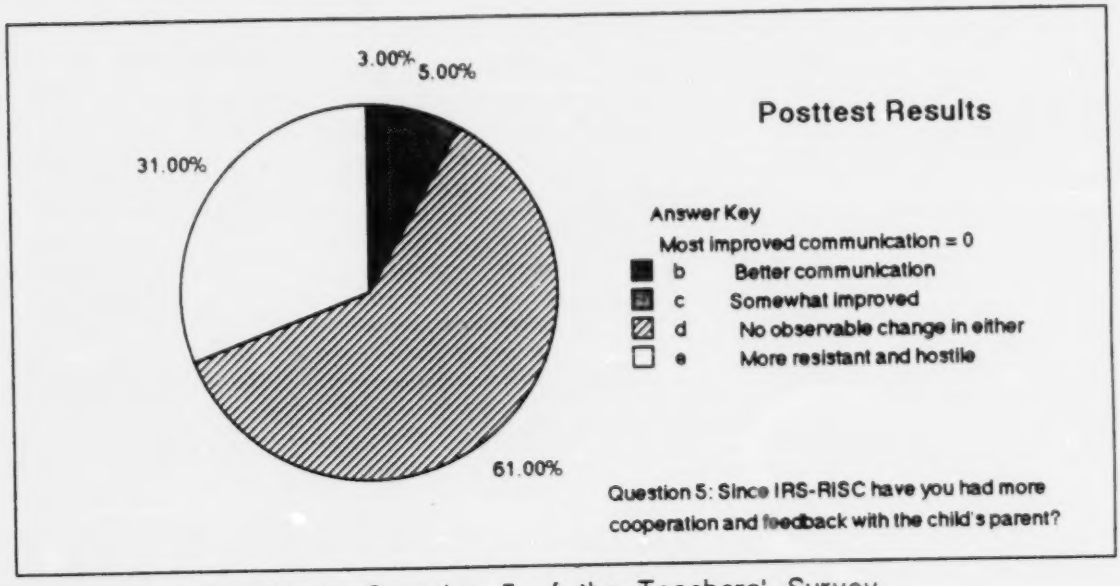
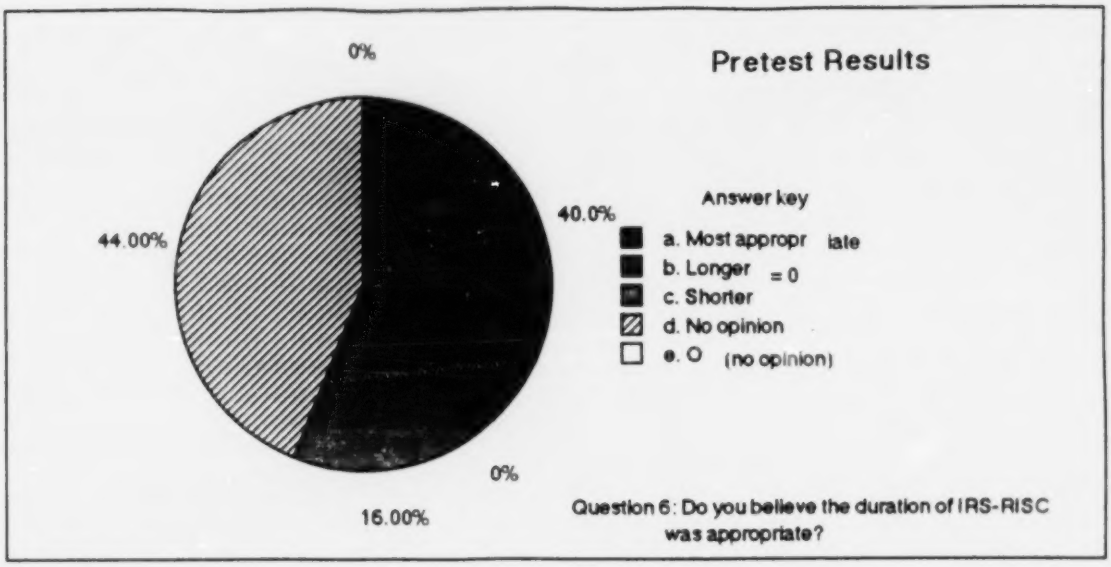


Figure 10. Results to Question 5 of the Teachers' Survey



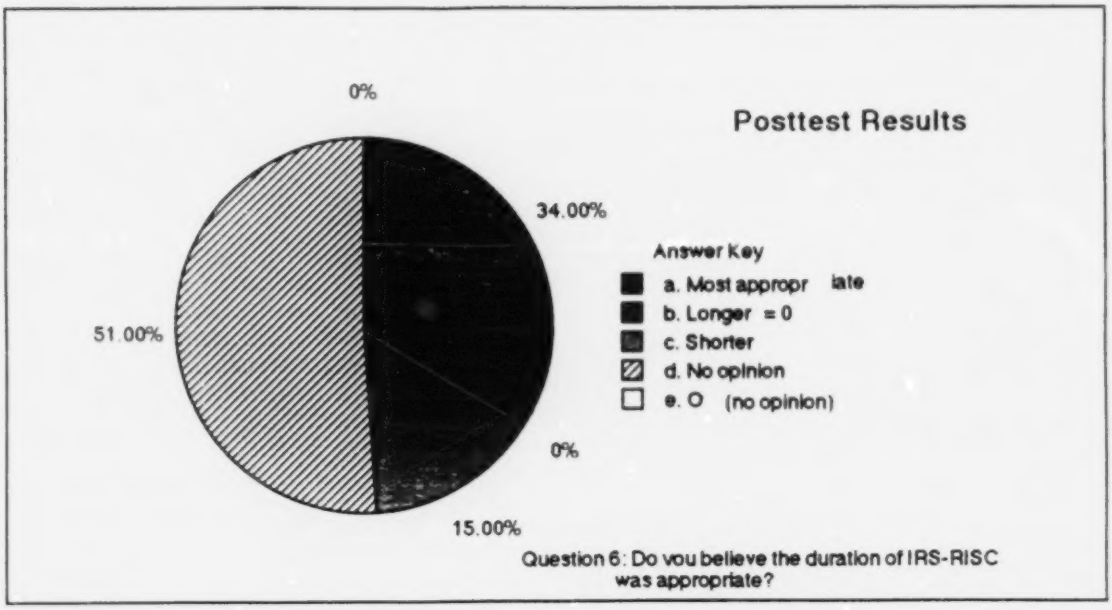


Figure 11. Results to Question 6 of the Teachers' Survey

Table 8

Results to Question 7 of the Teachers' Survey (n=205)

Teachers' Comments	
Pretest	Posttest
1.Good luck with your implemention.	1. ____has really beneffited from the in-room suspension. I really can't say that about ___ .
2.* It's too early to tell.	2.* The strengths would be that the student must come to school and work.
3.What a relief to be able to teach with-out petty annoyances.	3. The program had no affect on_____.
4. I hope it helps.	4. The program benefits those who are truly interested. It removes the disruptive.
5. I know Ms __ worked very hard with the children in in-room.	5. Its nice to see the 'laggers' finally catch-up. Ms ___must have worked patiently with them. It shows.
6. Now if we can get the special ed dept to do something similar.	6. It is a definite asset to be able to converse in Spanish as with Ms. ____. Once the children return, I lose the communication skill with the parent. I feel bad because it is like destroying a good foundation.
7. ____is trying and seems to be better behaved. I wonder how long that will last.	7. ___said he would like to go back to IRS-so you must be doing something right.
8. It was so nice to receive neat, orderly homework. We ought to have classes that just teach organizational skills.	8. Nice alternative to suspense.
9 A weakness is that they get too accustomed to individual attention. When they return to the classroom they look forward to it. When they don't receive it they revert back to their former ways.of disorderly conduct and sloppy work habits.	9. It's really is an inconvenience because we have to prepare all those lessons in advance or on demand.

Note. * = more than one answer

APPENDIX H

STUDENT-PARENT INTERVIEW CRITIQUE

STUDENT-PARENT INTERVIEW CRITIQUE

During presuspension conferences that were held among the referring administrators, parent(s), suspendee, and the writer, the following data and ordered format was used as the writer recorded the answers volunteered by the parents and suspendee. Uniformity was both preserved and insured. The parent was informed that the suspendee had been considered to partake in a program that was tauted as an alternative to suspense. It was a rehabilitative program. The offer was only valid with the full cooperation of all parties concerned. If at any time the student or parent failed to comply to the terms of the contingency contract, the suspension would be automatically implemented. In the event a parent was nonEnglish speaking, the academic STC or translator was requested to attend the presuspense conference

1. Directed to either parent or child:
   May I please have the following information?
   a. Name of parent/guardian, please
   b. Student's name
   c. address
   d. home phone
   e phone whereby the parent can be reached during the school day.
      1. If the parent was reluctant to give any of the information, had no working phone, could not rely on a relative or neighbor to act as guardian, or refused to submit an operating phone number, the interview was automatically terminated and the student was suspended according to the conditions and terms of the referring administrator.

2. Directed to the child:
Why have you received a presuspension-conference notice?
   a. How different were the grounds for this suspension than your previous suspension?
   b. Do you feel the current suspension was fairly executed?
   c. Were you aware that your infraction was suspendable?
   d. Have you been transferred from another school within the last two years because of inappropriate conduct?
   e. Were you suspended last term? Was the suspense based upon a similar infraction?
   f. Are you aware that if you receive another suspension it will automatically be a superintendent suspension; one which may result in a change of schools?
   h. Have you ever carried a weapon to school? If so, please explain.
   i. When was the last time you used drugs? What type of drug did you use? How often? Did you acquire the drug in school?

3. Directed to the parent.
As the parent, are you are aware that your child must be properly supervised at home when he/she is suspended? The suspension may last from 1-to-5 days depending on the administrator's decision.
   a. Have you, your child or family members ever received counseling, privately or at the school? If so, how long have you been attending? Have you been attending regularly? Do you see an improvement?
   b. Has your child or any member of your family ever been evaluated? In what grade? What was the recommendation of the evaluators? (If the parent failed to honor the recommendation, I would ask why.)

c. Does your child receive resource as a result of the evaluation? With whom? How many times a week?

d. Is your child currently under any medication? Has any been prescribed by a physician or psychiatrist? Does your child take the medication prescribed? How often should the medication be taken? Who oversees his/her taking the medication?

4. Directed to the child:
Without naming a particular teacher, what 3 things do you like about your favorite teacher. Again, without naming names. what 3 things do you dislike about any teacher?

5 Directed to both:
There is an advantage and a disadvantage to this program. The advantage is that this IRS-RISC is not recorded as a formal suspension. It is also a program whereby teachers carefully observe both your behavior as well as your academic performance. It is like putting you under a microscope in order help you as much as we can. The disadvantage is that it is not for everyone. The only time you will be able to associate with your friends will be during line-up, before official class, and after dismissal, at 3 o'clock. You will not be allowed to eat lunch with your friends, partake in shops or gym. I (speaking as the dean) will do two things. First, I will read the terms of the contingency contract to you both, and I will answer any questions either of you may have concerning the contract. Secondly, I will introduce you to your teachers and show to you the classroom you will occupy while in the IRS-RISC. You will do all your academic work in this room. You will receive no privileges unless they are earned. As a parent you are being asked to share in your child's development. You should insist

on seeing his anecdotal or point-evaluation sheet, daily. If you have any questions please feel free to call either the STC teacher or myself at any time of the school day. This is not an annoyance. This is suggested and encouraged. Phone numbers will be provided after the contracts are signed. Since your child's return to class is dependent upon his/her obtaining 750 points, absences only delay your child's progress in the program.

Upon our return from meeting your teachers, if you wish to be assigned to the program rather than be suspended, we will each sign the contract.

APPENDIX I

THE MODIFIED CONTINGENCY CONTRACT

THE DAVID A. STEIN RIVERDALE J.H.S. 141

MELVIN KATZ, PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
Joseph Imperial
Ronald Lang
Sonia Rodriguez

DEANS
Ireneanne Novell
Richard Wendlinger
Byron Whitter

IRS-RISC Contract

(IN-Room Suspension)...(Rehabilitation through Isolation, Structure, and Curriculum)

Date _____199__

Student's Name_____

Class_____ Presuspension Date_____

Parent's Name_____

Phone
(Home)_____Business_____Beeper____

Address_____Ave:__St:__or:_

Apt:_____PH:____Bronx:_____ N.Y:____N.Y. Zip _____

As a result of the presuspension conference, dated above, the school offers to temporarily put aside the right of suspension of the student listed above, in return for the successful completion of

the IRS-RISC program on the part of the assignee. It has been agreed by student, parent(s), and dean that the student will immediately enter IRS-RISC, on this day, (circle one) Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, (date) _____, for a minimum of 10 school days, or until **750 Points** and the recommendation of the teachers-in-charge are obtained (as illustrated on the following page) by the student. Under no condition will the pupil remain in the program for more than three weeks, or 15 school days. If the youngster fails to comply with the rules and regulations setforth, the parent agrees, upon notice by the school, to escort the assignee home whereby the suspension, based on the former infraction, will become effective immediately.

The learner has the right to an uninterrupted education whereby the subject teachers will prepare and grade all necessary lessons. The student (circle one) [will, will not] be allowed a FREE lunch (lunch-pass number._____) and lavatory privileges at scheduled periods during the school day.

The parent has the right to observe the program at any time and/or receive a daily progress sheet, in order to monitor the progress of the child.

The school reserves the right to search the child via a security guard for any unlawful weapons or substantive abuse materials. The rules and regulations governing attendance, scholastics, and conduct of David A. Stein Middle School will continue to be in effect; all students are expected to adhere to them.

Student's signature: _____Date _____

Parent's signature: _____Date _____

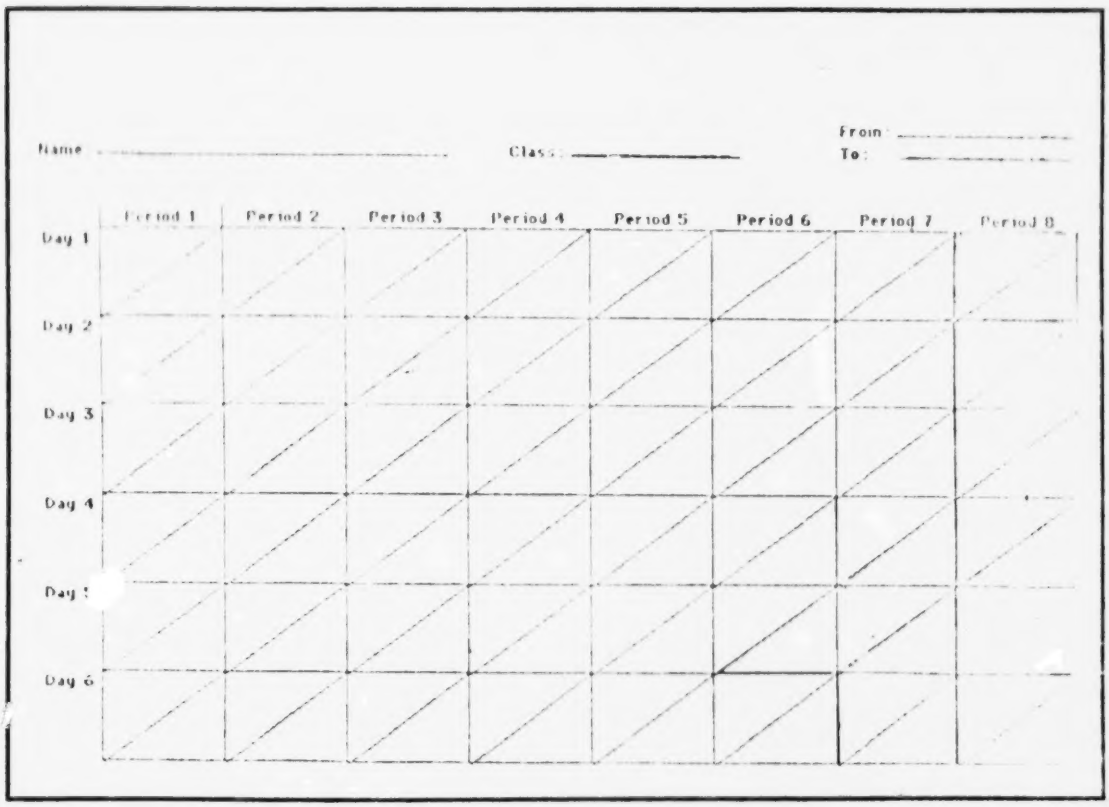
Dean's signature: _____Date _____

APPENDIX J

THE STUDENT PROGRESS SHEET

The Student Progress Sheet

English form



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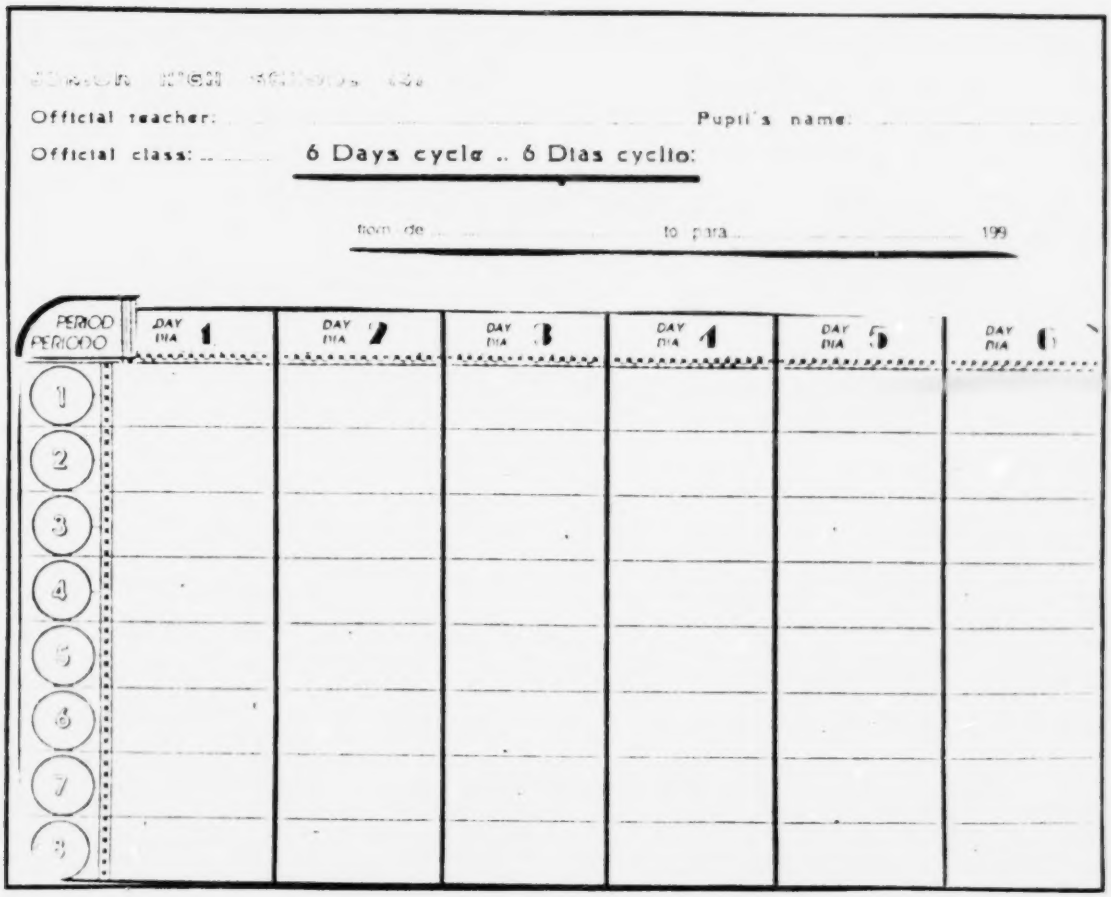
Spanish form:



Official teacher: ..... Pupil's name: .....

Official class: ..... 6 Days cycle .. 6 Dias ciclo:

from de ..... to para 199

PERIOD PERIODO	DAY DIA 1	DAY DIA 2	DAY DIA 3	DAY DIA 4	DAY DIA 5	DAY DIA 6
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX K

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

Assignment Request Form

Date _____

Name	Class	Dates From _____ to _____	Type
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Key: P.S. = Principal's Suspension S.S. = Superintendent's Suspension
IRS (RISC) = In-room Suspension

Dear Teachers,

The students listed above have been suspended as indicated. Kindly forward any/all class work as well as homework to _____, room _____, no later than _____, so that their academics may continue without disruption. The work will be returned to you (daily, periodically) for grading, corrections, and comments.

Appreciating your thoughtfulness and professionalism and thanking you in advance, I remain

Appreciatively,
I. Novell, Dean